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DISCIPLINE IN THE COMMUNIST PARTY, USA

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John Edgar Hoover, Director

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DISCIPLINE

IN THE

COMMUNIST PARTY, USA

June, 1955

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PREFACE

This monograph is a detailed study of discipline in the Communist Party in the United States during its 36-year history, 1919-1955.

Part I shows the general nature and meaning of Communist discipline; Part II enumerates the factors contributing to the acceptance of this discipline by members of the Communist Party; and Part III describes the techniques utilized by the Communist Party, USA, to enforce discipline in its ranks.

This monograph has been compiled from both public and confidential sources. The public sources are identified in the back of this monograph, while the confidential sources have been retained by this Bureau.

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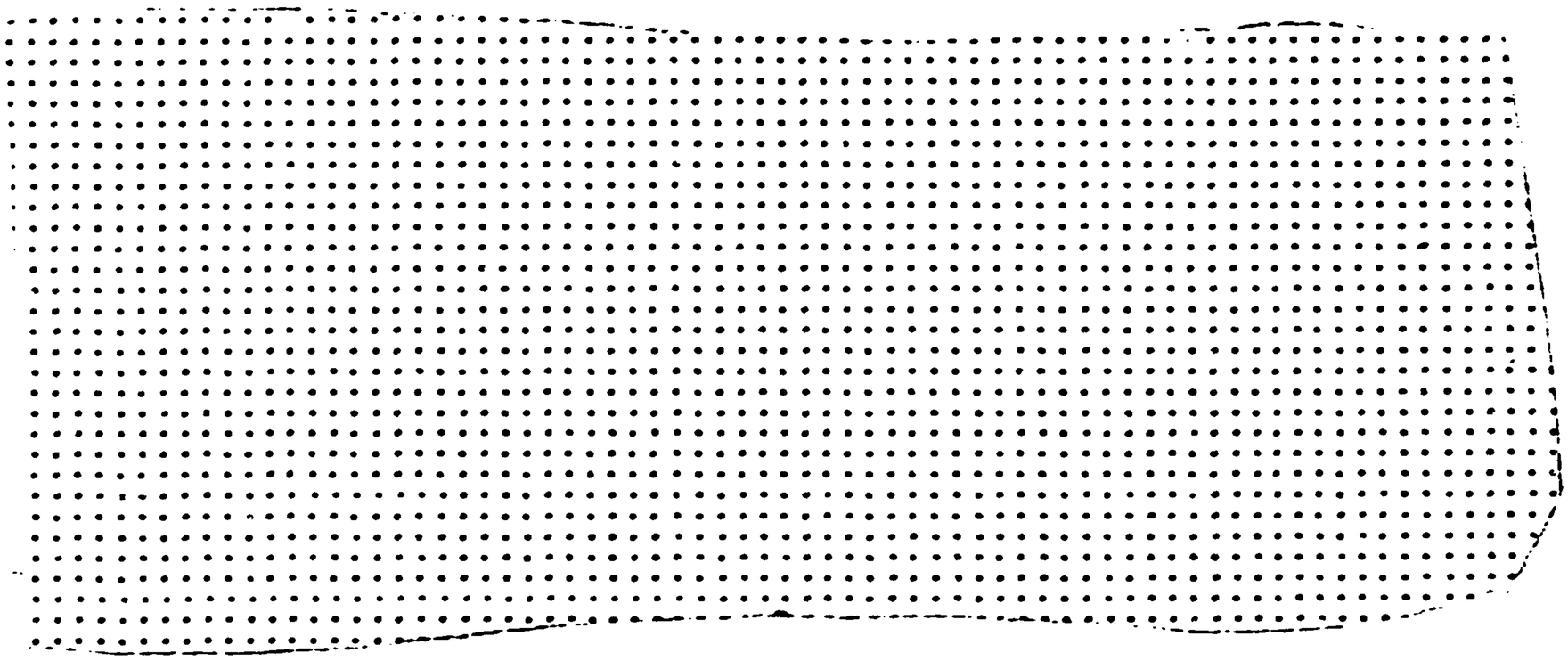
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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

A. Summary

B. Conclusions

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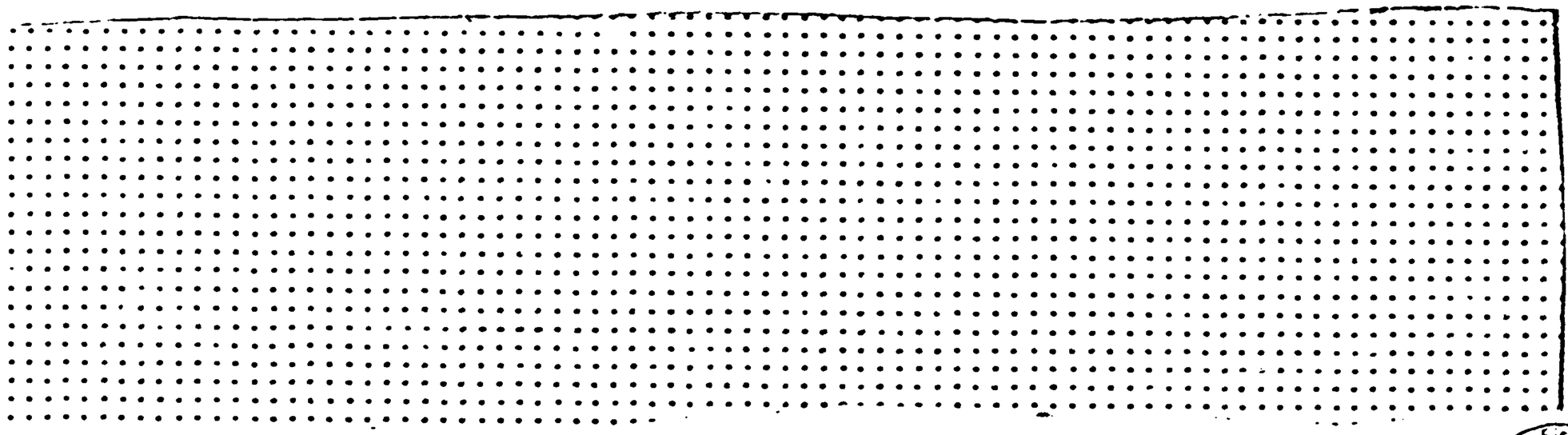
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I. NATURE AND MEANING OF COMMUNIST DISCIPLINE

A. Concept and Basis

"Discipline is an artificial bond," Lord Roberts told the House of Lords in 1914, "forged for the purpose of converting an unorganized collection of men into an organized body, amenable to authority." It is a bond which "tends to gall the wearer and to repress his individuality, when first submitted to, but which gradually becomes a source of pride and satisfaction as he realizes the necessity for it and the cumulative strength it affords." [1]



The basis of Communist discipline was clearly explained in 1935 by J. Peters, a representative of the Communist International* in the United States before World War II and an authority on Communist Party organization, in a manual he prepared on Communist Party organization:

*The Communist International, commonly known as the Comintern or "C. I.," was the co-ordinating body of the international Communist movement from 1919 until its dissolution in 1943.

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> "Party discipline is based upon the class-consciousness of its members; upon the conviction that without the minority accepting and carrying out the decisions of the majority, without the subordination of the lower Party organizations to the higher committees, there can be no strong, solid, steeled Party able to lead the proletariat. This discipline is based upon the acceptance of the C. I. and the Party program and in the confidence of the membership in the Communist International and in the Central Committee."[2]

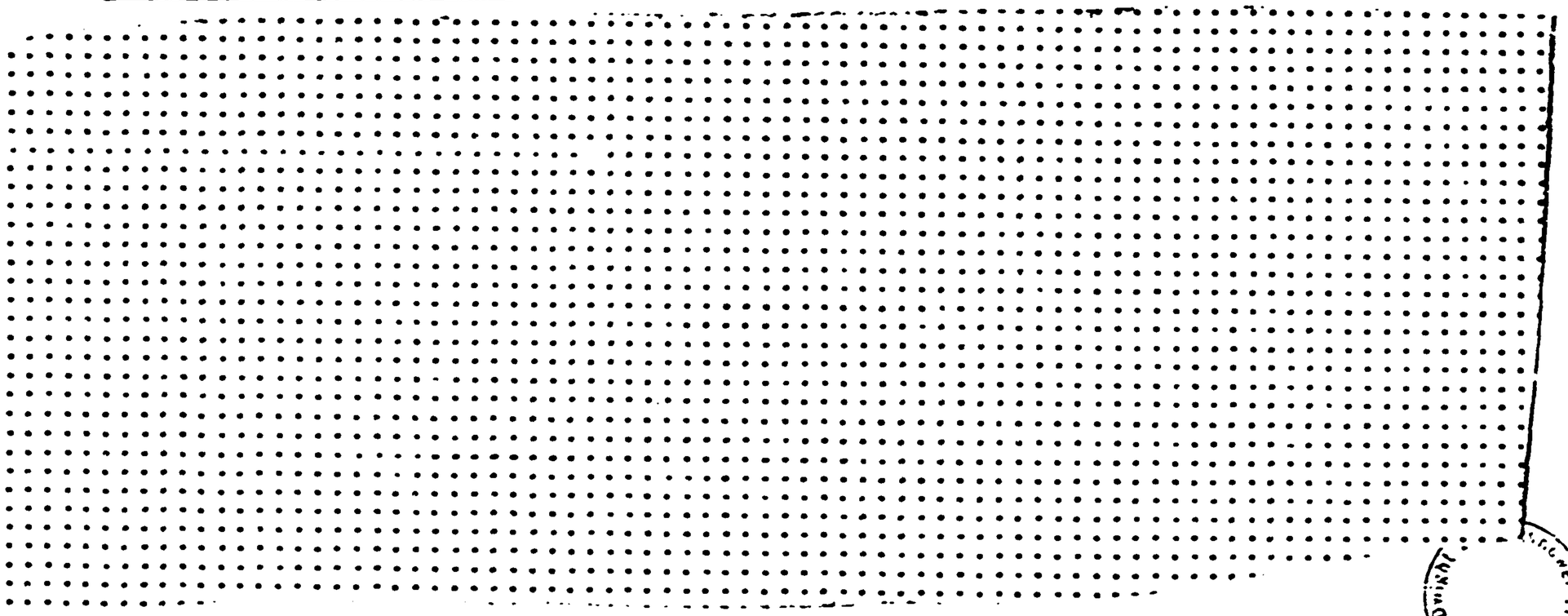
Communist discipline does not embrace merely local, sectional, regional, district or national areas; it is international, extending throughout the world. Communist discipline does not merely apply to individuals but encompasses organizations as well. Communist Parties and individuals alike are subject to the inexorable tentacles of Communist discipline. The object is to have a common discipline of individual wills and a common discipline of collective wills bound tightly to common leadership on a world basis.

This was expressed in the program adopted by the Communist International at its Sixth World Congress in Moscow in 1928. According to this program, "the successful struggle of the Communist International for the dictatorship of the proletariat presupposes the existence in every country of a compact Communist Party, hardened in the struggle, disciplined, centralized and closely linked up with the masses."[3]

The existence of international discipline to further the mutuality of interests of Communist Parties everywhere was indicated by Georgi Dimitroff, onetime general secretary of the Communist International:

> "In the revolutionary section of the world proletariat a common international discipline prevails. The actions of the Bolshevik Party of the Soviet Union correspond to the interests of the toilers of France, as well as of Germany, America and other countries. And what the French, English, American, Japanese or Chinese Communists undertake to do is never in contradiction to the interests of the Soviet Union." [4]

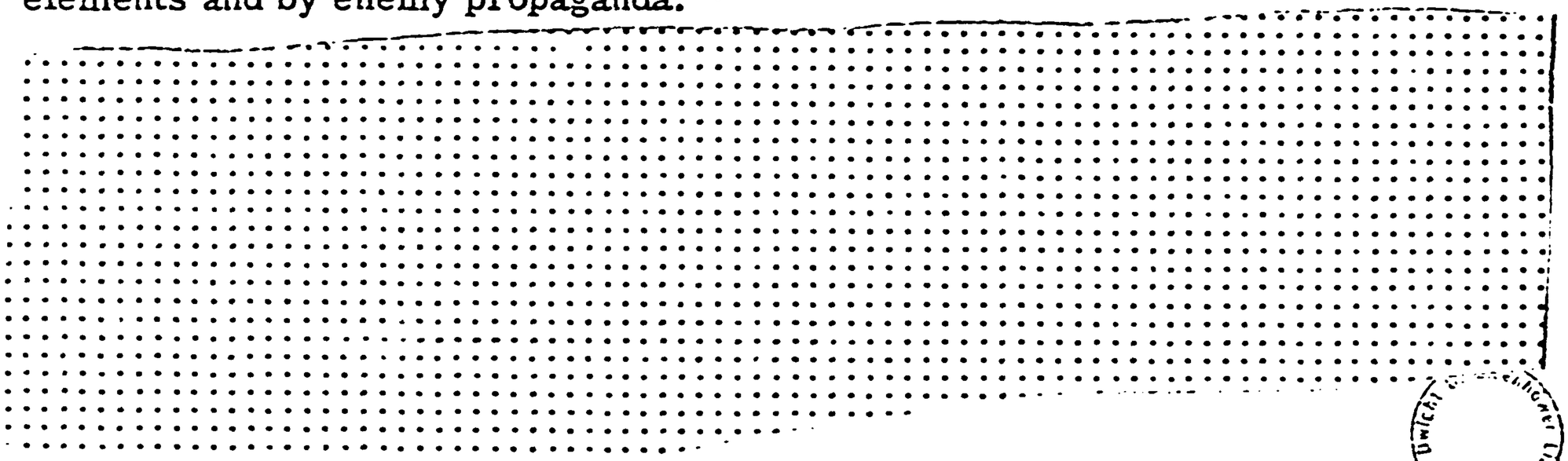
B. Need and Importance



"No revolutionary organization," Lenin admonished his followers, "has ever, or can ever, base itself on broad democracy, however much it may desire to!" [5] Instead, as in every army, it must be based on discipline. Discipline, the foundation of armies, is the iron core of Communism. Without severe standards of discipline, the Communists would never

have won their successes. "Certainly, nearly everyone now realises," wrote Lenin in 1920, "that the Bolsheviks could not have maintained themselves in power for two and a half years, and not even for two and a half months, without the strictest discipline, truly iron discipline in our Party..." [6]

Lenin, in fact, suggested that the Communist movement has an even greater need for discipline than a regular military command, since the latter usually functions as a compact unit which is more or less isolated and insulated from the enemy by its own front lines, whereas Communist forces are highly dispersed and are literally surrounded on all sides by enemy elements and by enemy propaganda. [7]



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Stalin echoed Lenin's views by emphasizing that "the Communist Party can discharge its duty only if it is organised with the highest degree of centralisation, ruled by iron discipline bordering on military discipline..." [8]

The importance which Communists attach to discipline is graphically detailed by J. Peters:

> "... without discipline there is no unity of will, no unity of action. Our Party is the organized and most advanced section of the working class. The Party is the vanguard of the proletariat in the class war. In this class war there is the capitalist class with its henchmen and helpers, the reformist leaders, on one side, and the working class and its allies, on the other. The class war is bitter. The enemy is powerful; it has all the means of deceit and suppression (armed forces, militia, police, courts, movies, radio, press, schools, churches, etc.). In order to combat and defeat this powerful enemy, the army of the proletariat must have a highly skilled, trained General Staff (the Communist Party), which is united in action and has one will. How can an army fight against the army of the enemy if every soldier in the army is allowed to question and even disobey orders of his superior officers? What would happen in a war if, for example, the General Staff orders an attack, and one section of the army decides to obey and go into battle; another thinks that it is wrong to attack the enemy at this time and stays away from the battle; and a third section decides to quit the trenches and retreat to another position instead of going forward?"

. . . . . .

"Our Party cannot lead the masses if there is not unity in action. Unity of will and action can be achieved only if all the members of the Party act as one--are disciplined. If each Party member should decide which decision of the Party he wanted to carry out; if each member would carry out only those decisions which he liked and ignored those with which he disagreed, it would be impossible to lead the masses in the struggle against capitalism. An army with that kind of leadership would be defeated." [9]

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C. Criticism and Self-Criticism

Criticism and self-criticism play a large role in the Communist movement. The idea of such criticism is raised to a basic organizational principle, and ability to engage in it is a much glorified trait of the "bolshevik man." It takes the place, in Communist organizations, of discussion in non-Communist organizations.

According to Stalin, criticism and self-criticism mean that "the Bolsheviks are in duty bound not to gloss over their mistakes, not to dodge the question of their mistakes, as often happens with us, but honestly and openly to admit their mistakes, honestly and openly to indicate the way of correcting these mistakes, honestly and openly to correct them." 10

As in so many other instances, what Communists mean by freedom of criticism is the exact opposite of the meaning as interpreted by non-Communists. In the United States, any system of thought, any body of principles, any course of action, or any person or group of persons can be criticized to the very roots. This is not true of the Communists. They are not free to criticize any of the basic principles of their theory or the application of this theory by the Party and its leaders once a decision has been made. Their freedom of thought, expression, criticism and action is very much limited to certain nonessentials or secondary issues in Communism, or to the opposition.

The purpose and utility of self-criticism has been well defined by Louis F. Budenz, former managing editor of the Daily Worker and a one-time prominent Communist:

> "Self-criticism...is most useful when a change in the line occurs. Then, even though the leading comrades, at least, all know that the change has been dictated by Moscow, everyone heaps abuse on himself for his mistakes and remissness in carrying out the previous line. Whether in accepting the Hitler-Stalin pact or doing a quick aboutface on the 'peace for generations' propaganda, in accordance with the Duclos letter of 1945, they always blame themselves. It is an amazing psychological exhibition. But there is method in this madness...; for by having the individual Red blame himself for the change in line, the party itself is protected from criticism." [11]

Some degree of criticism is permissible within the Communist Party, but on two conditions: (1) the criticism must be criticism of the Party in general, and not so formulated as to constitute an attack on the central leadership; (2) the criticism must not be organized, that is, there must be no factions or opposition press.

During the 1930's, when Stalin's cohorts commenced to indulge in "Bolshevik self-criticism" by criticizing Stalin's administration, they were promptly denounced as counterrevolutionary plotters and traitors and finally purged. Thus, when criticism was directed toward the Stalin regime, its meaning changed at once; it was no longer constructive but was destructive and treasonable.

Three purposes at least are served by this indulgence in criticism and self-criticism, according to Budenz. First, when a great emergency arises and a sharp change in the line is made, the Communists literally "wallow" in self-criticism in order to assure complete submission to the sharp change that has been ordered from Moscow. Thereby, they obscure by means of a peculiar psychological process the patent fact that the change has been made solely because it complies with the Kremlin's will and wish. By placing upon themselves the blame for weaknesses in the execution of the last line, the one that has been rejected or changed, they seek to prepare a way for an explanation of the new line as having arisen from their own activities. Each Communist, in engaging in these mental gymnastics, is fully aware that the new line to which he is subscribing has been ordered by Moscow and is in accordance with new policies of the Kremlin, and that the switch of his respective Party is being made at the same time that Soviet tactics are being switched. [12]

with each of the top national leaders seemingly striving to outdo the others in confessing that he was a dolt and a dupe.

Another purpose of criticism and self-criticism, said Budenz, is to establish complete ideological unity within the Communist ranks. By his constant reiteration that he will guard against all weaknesses impairing execution of the line, the Communist conditions himself to the acceptance of any zigzag in policy that may be required of him. This practice, repeated throughout every branch and higher organ of the Party, makes certain that the maximum of submission to the line and to any future line will be attained.

Third, criticism and self-criticism give that "thrust forward" which enables the Communist machine to put redoubled energy into its efforts and to stimulate added fanaticism and vigor in the individual Communist. Even though every Communist does not respond to criticism and

D. Democratic Centralism

The Communist movement's recognition of the need for a completely integrated and disciplined organization on an international scale can be seen from even a casual review of the various statements issued by the Third Communist International which was established in 1919. Of particular significance was the resolution adopted by the Second World Congress of this International held in Moscow in 1920 which laid down a set of "conditions

of affiliation" for any Communist Party interested in joining the International.

Two of these "conditions" are especially revealing:

> "12. Parties belonging to the Communist International must be built up on the principle of democratic centralism. At the present time of acute civil war, the Communist Party will only be able fully to do its duty when it is organised in the most centralized manner, if it has iron discipline, bordering on military discipline, and if the Party center is a powerful, authoritative organ with wide powers, possessing the general trust of the party membership."
>
> . . . . . .
>
> "16. All decisions of the Congresses of the Communist International, as well as the decisions of its Executive Committee, are binding on all parties affiliated to the Communist International. The Communist International, operating in the midst of most acute civil war, must have a far more centralized form of organization than that of the Second International...." (Underscored word italicized in original) [13]

Although Communist disciplinary principles recognize the necessity for the discussion of differences that must accompany any major decision, "the discussion of controversial questions," said Lenin, "is permissible only up to the moment that they are decided. After these questions have been decided by the leading organs of the Party conferences or congresses, these decisions must be carried out without any reservation, even if a given number, or a whole organization, does not agree with the decision."[14]

Stalin voiced the same views when he wrote:

"...iron discipline does not preclude but presupposes conscious and voluntary submission, for only conscious discipline can be truly iron discipline. But after a contest of opinion has been closed, after criticism has been exhausted and a decision has been arrived at, unity of will and unity of action of all Party members are the necessary conditions without which neither Party unity nor iron discipline in the Party is conceivable." [15]

The Communist Party is not a debating society, declared Betty Gannett, when she was assistant organization secretary of the Communist Party, USA:

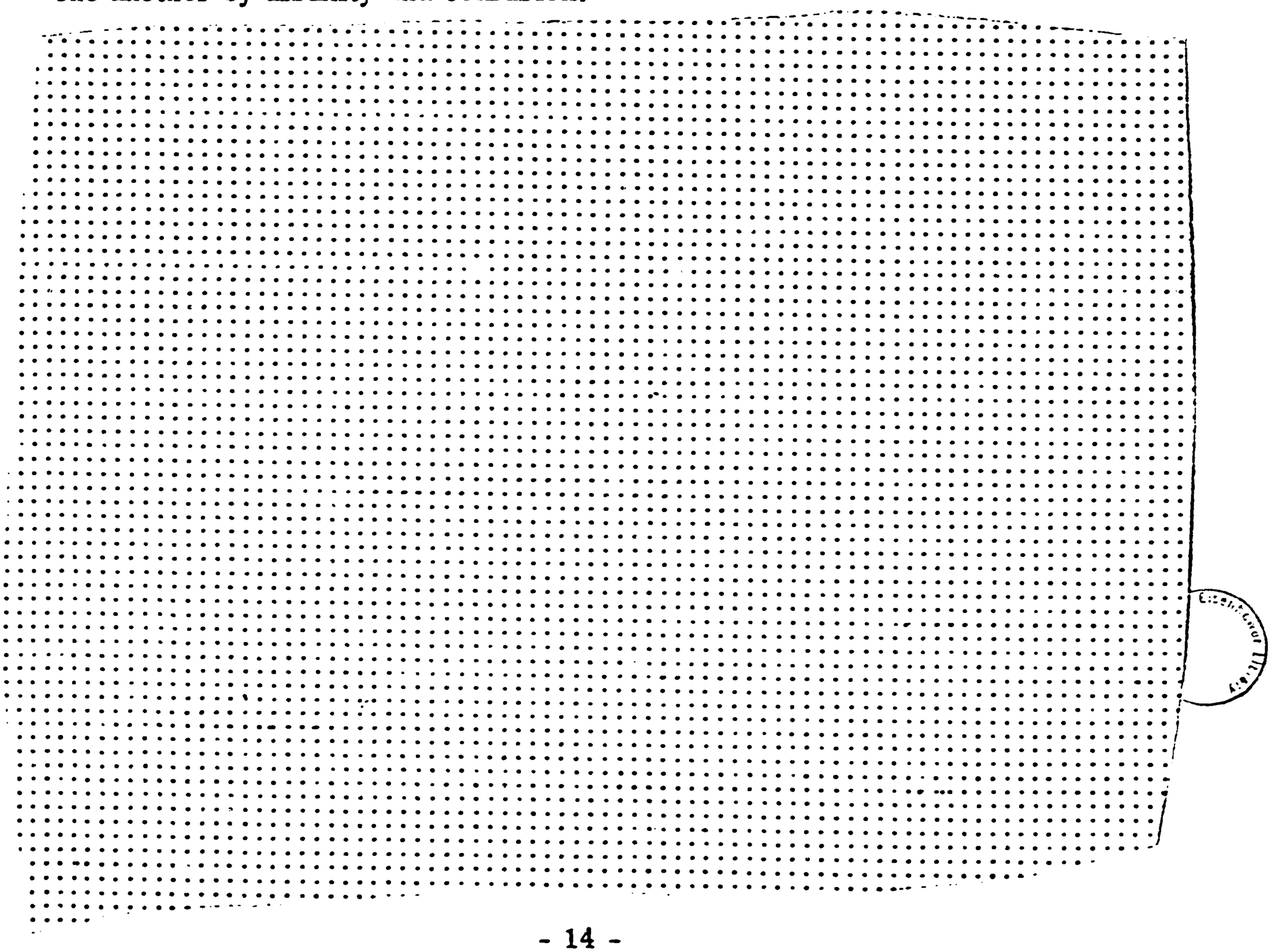
"...It cannot endlessly debate questions. Once the discussions are ended, once the majority has arrived at a decision, there exists but one rule for Communists--to carry out the decision made by the majority...."

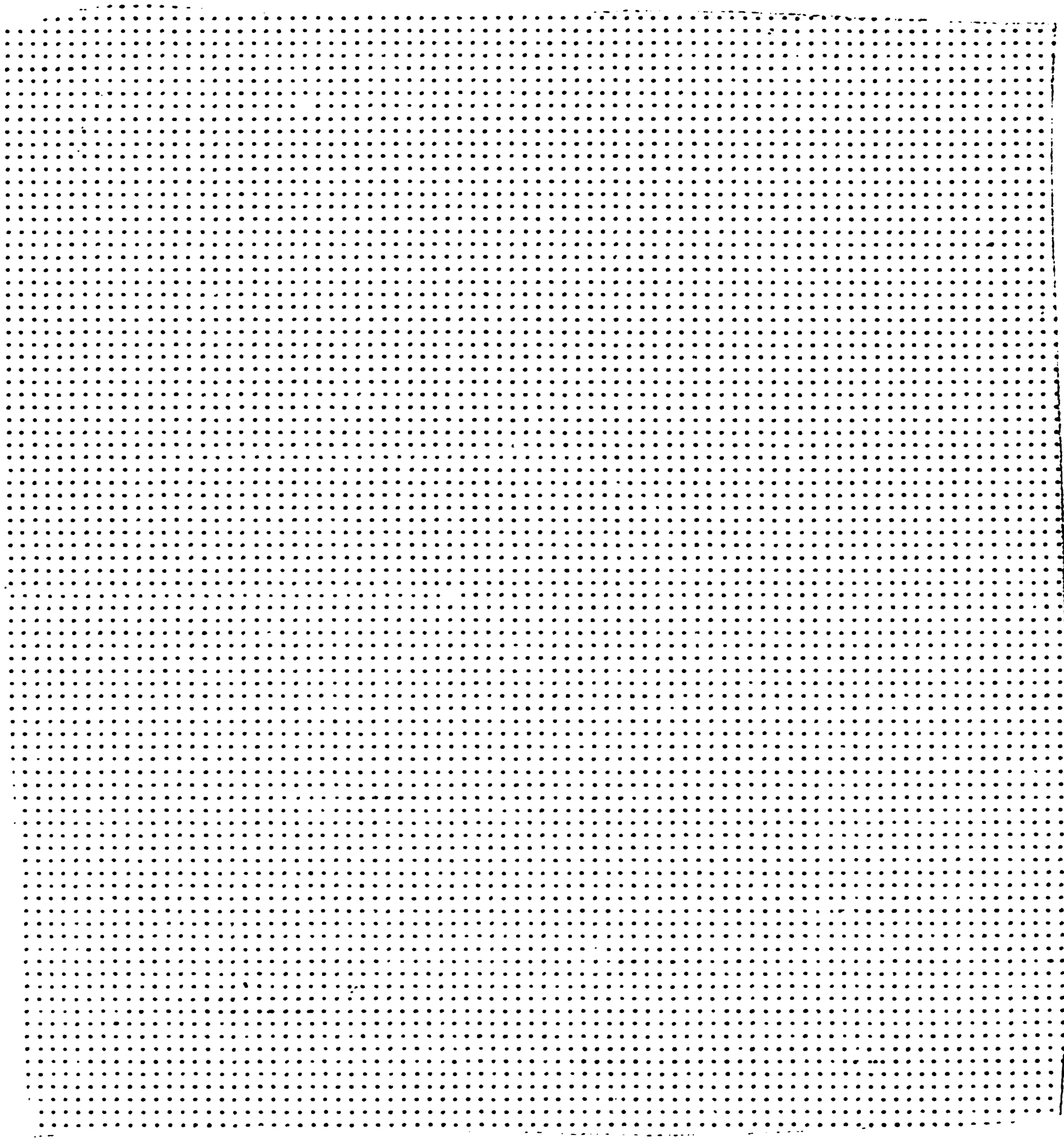
. . . . . .

"Imagine, if you can, the consequences if each Communist should decide which decision he wanted to carry out and which he wanted to ignore. Imagine further that every Communist club when it disagreed with a decision, would decide to do just the opposite. Or, imagine that the Communist Party consisted of different groups and factions, each pursuing different policies and offering different solutions to problems faced by the workers. You can see how the Communist Party would be torn asunder in a thousand different directions, and that it could never achieve, under such circumstances, that unity of will and action which is its fundamental strength." [16]

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The system of democratic centralism, according to Earl Browder, former general secretary of the Communist Party, USA, achieves "a united party, motivated by a uniform strategy and tactic, uniting tens of thousands of wills into a single will, concentrating into one great proletarian fist that multitude of individual forces that would otherwise cancel one another by disunity and confusion." [17]



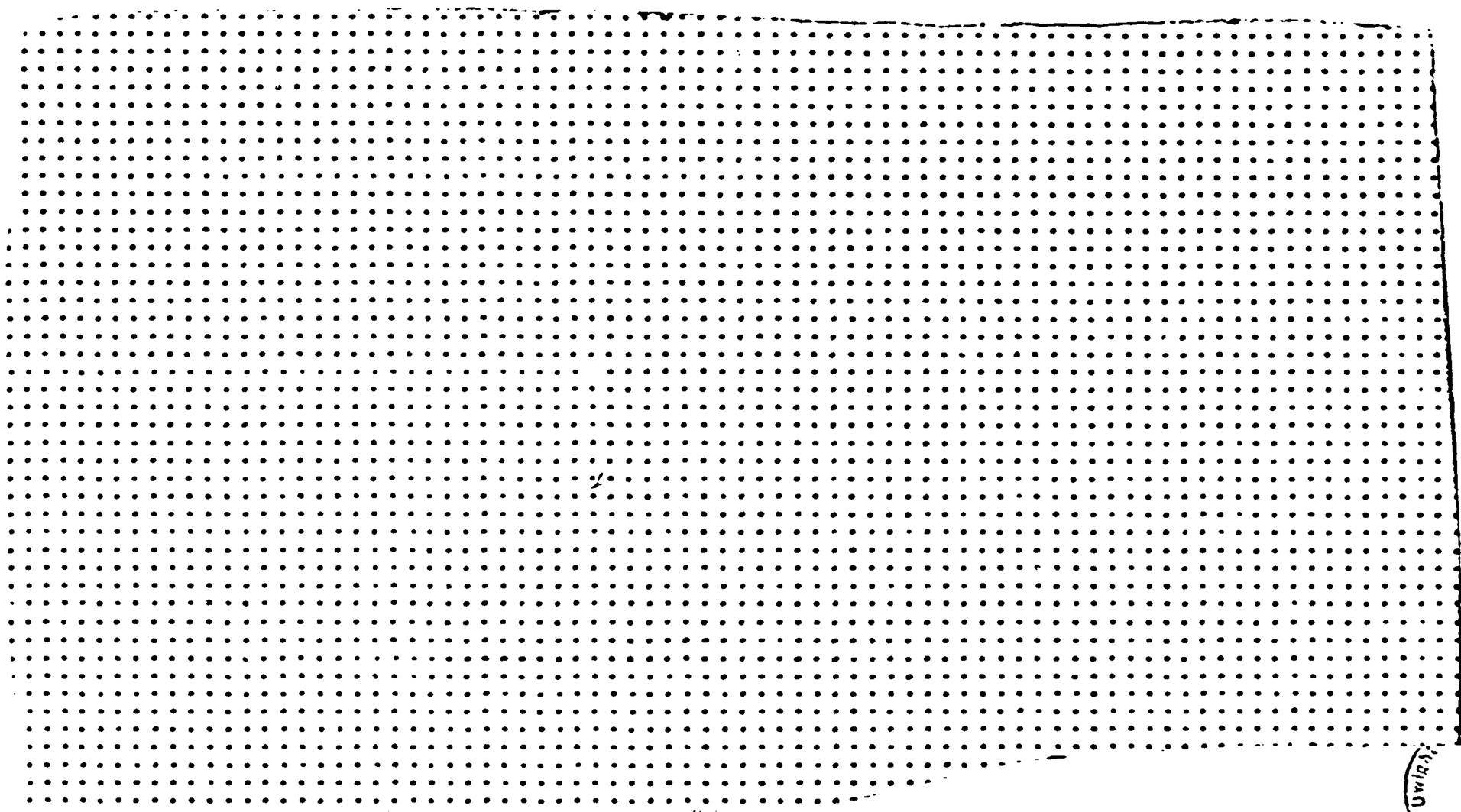


So-called discussions "among the entire membership" without factional meetings, platforms or slates of candidates in effect eliminates the possibility of developing new centers of power within the ranks, thereby guaranteeing the continued dominance of the existing leadership. As a matter of actual practice, democratic centralism has resulted in the most rigid dictatorship which controls every Communist Party in the world as well as Soviet Russia itself. It is a deceptive facade concealing vicious, ruthless, arbitrary authority. The two terms "democratic" and "centralism" as welded together in one phrase by Communists are incongruous. It amounts to saying "democratic dictatorship," which is a patent absurdity.

E. Purges

The purge is a notorious characteristic of the Communist movement everywhere. The Communists themselves have made no effort to conceal this fact. Party textbooks frankly acknowledge that the purging, or "cleansing," of Communist ranks is an established practice both in the USSR and elsewhere. The History of the Communist Party of the Soviet

Union (Bolsheviks), which is the official history of the Communist movement in Russia, is replete from beginning to end with references to the "cleansing" of various "dissident," "wavering" or "opportunist" elements from the ranks of the Bolshevik Party and the purging of "Mensheviks," "Trotskyites," "Right Opportunists," "Populists," "Social Revolutionaries" and others. 18



Lenin was a firm advocate of purges. "If we really succeed... in purging our Party from top to bottom, 'without respect for persons,' the gains for the revolution will really be enormous...." He also added, "The fact that we shall purge the Party of a couple of hundred thousand will be useful, but this is only a tiny fraction of what we must do...." 19

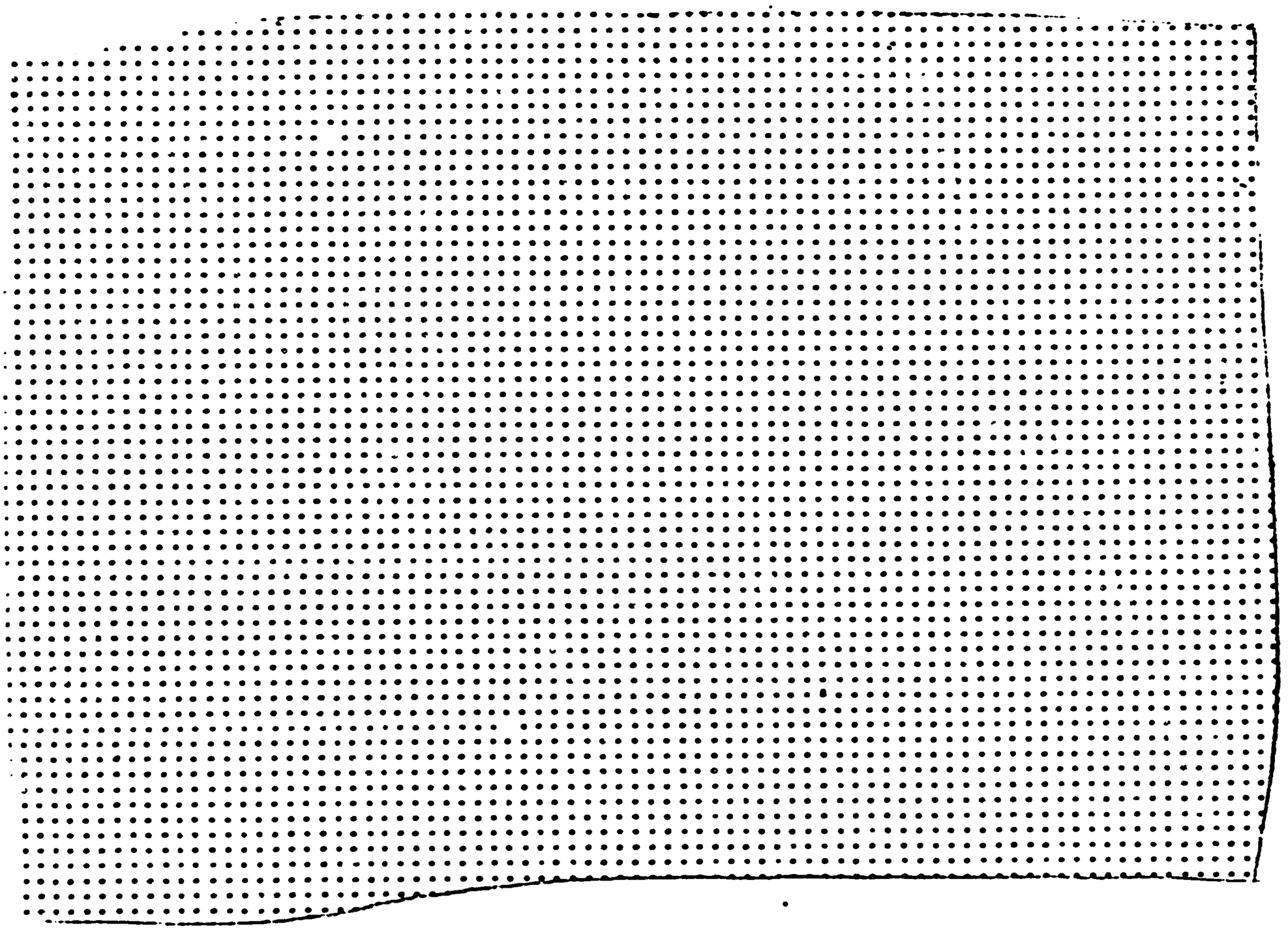
Stalin likewise contended that the Party was strengthened by purges:

> "...Our Party could not have come out onto the high road, it could not have seized power and organised the dictatorship of the proletariat, it could not have emerged victorious from the civil war, if it had had within its ranks people like Martov and Dan, Potresov and Axelrod. Our Party succeeded in creating true unity and greater cohesion in its ranks than ever before, mainly because it undertook in time to purge itself of opportunist pollution and expelled the liquidators and Mensheviks from its ranks. The proletarian parties develop and become strong by purging themselves of opportunists and reformists, social-imperialists and social-chauvinists, social-patriots and social-pacifists. The Party becomes strong by ridding itself of opportunist elements." 20

William Z. Foster, currently national chairman of the Communist Party, USA, is in agreement with both Lenin and Stalin on this score:

> "Communist parties, in line with Lenin's teachings, also constantly strengthen the fiber of their organization by cleansing their ranks of elements that have become confused, corrupted, worn-out, or defeated in the hard and complex struggle to build the forces of socialism in the face of a still powerful and militant capitalism.... The life of the great Communist Party of the Soviet Union, for example, has been marked by the sloughing off of many useless or alien elements, who have been weighed and found wanting during the course of the hard struggle to build socialism. Communist parties in other countries have had similar purifying experiences. Nor has the Communist Party in the United States been an exception to the rule--we, too, have had alien elements in our ranks who, surrendering to the powerful pressures of American capitalism, took an anti-Communist line and found themselves outside the party." 21

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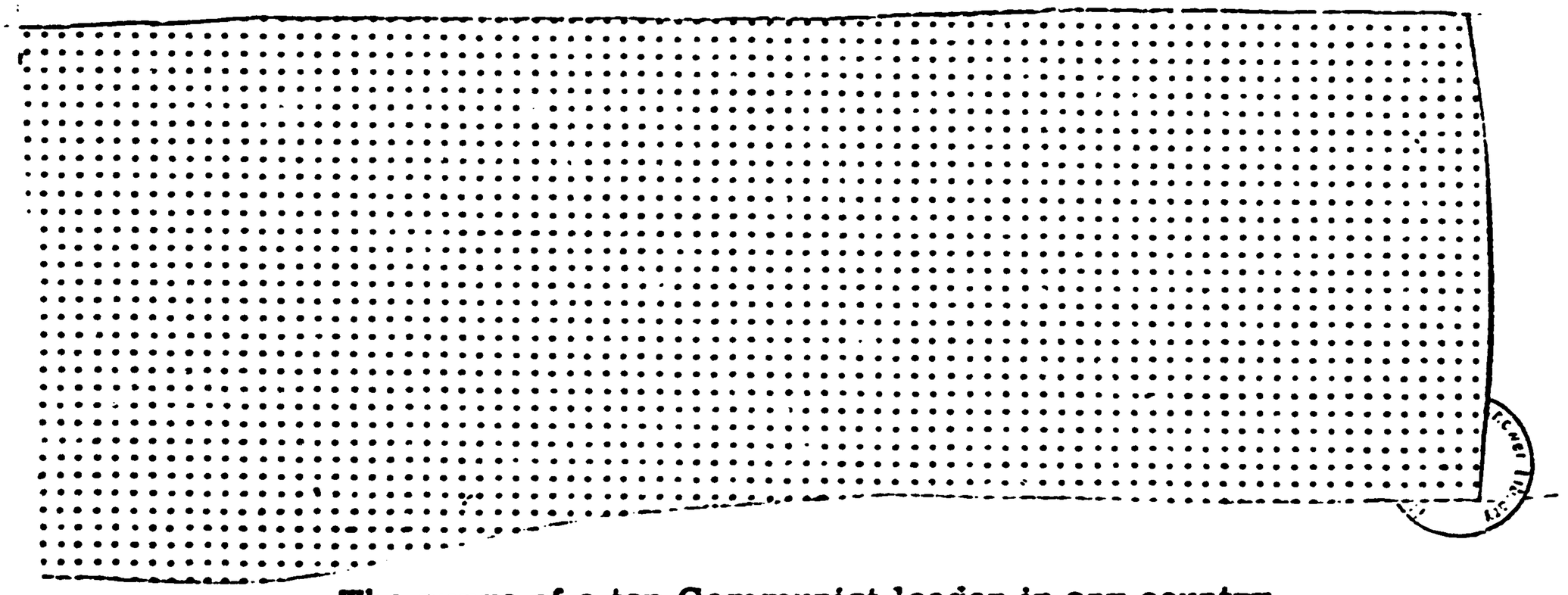
In Communist-ruled countries, those found "guilty" are generally sentenced to death. Since American Communists cannot exact the death penalty, they must be content to resort to demotion, expulsion, scorn, ridicule and character-assassination.

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Inner-Party feuds in the American Communist Party have been conducted under the guise of ideological struggles, with the victorious

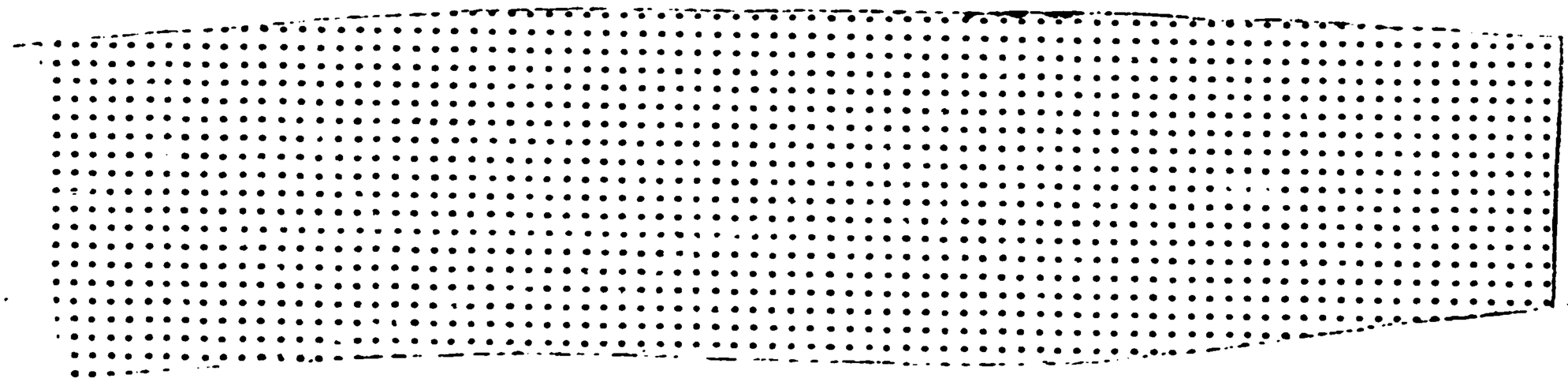
leader boasting of giving the Party true Marxist-Leninist direction and at the same time denouncing the loser for his deviationism or factionalism.

In addition to facilitating the elimination of political rivals, purges are also employed to punish those who fail to correctly interpret and apply the "infallible science" of Marxism-Leninism to any given event or situation, and to discipline those who dissent or deviate from accepted Communist theoretical principles or the current Party line. In every failure or backfiring of a program or policy in Communist-ruled countries or in Communist Parties in non-Communist countries, there is need to blame someone as a scapegoat for the lack of success.



The purge of a top Communist leader in any country--including the United States--invariably sets off a chain reaction of other "liquidations" or expulsions involving scores or hundreds of persons

suspected of having supported or sympathized with the former leader. Almost without exception, everyone who has ever been associated with the deposed leader, no matter how tenuous the connection might be and without regard to time or circumstance, can expect to be classed as "politically unreliable" and purged in one way or another.



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II. FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO ACCEPTANCE OF DISCIPLINE

A. Selection and Indoctrination

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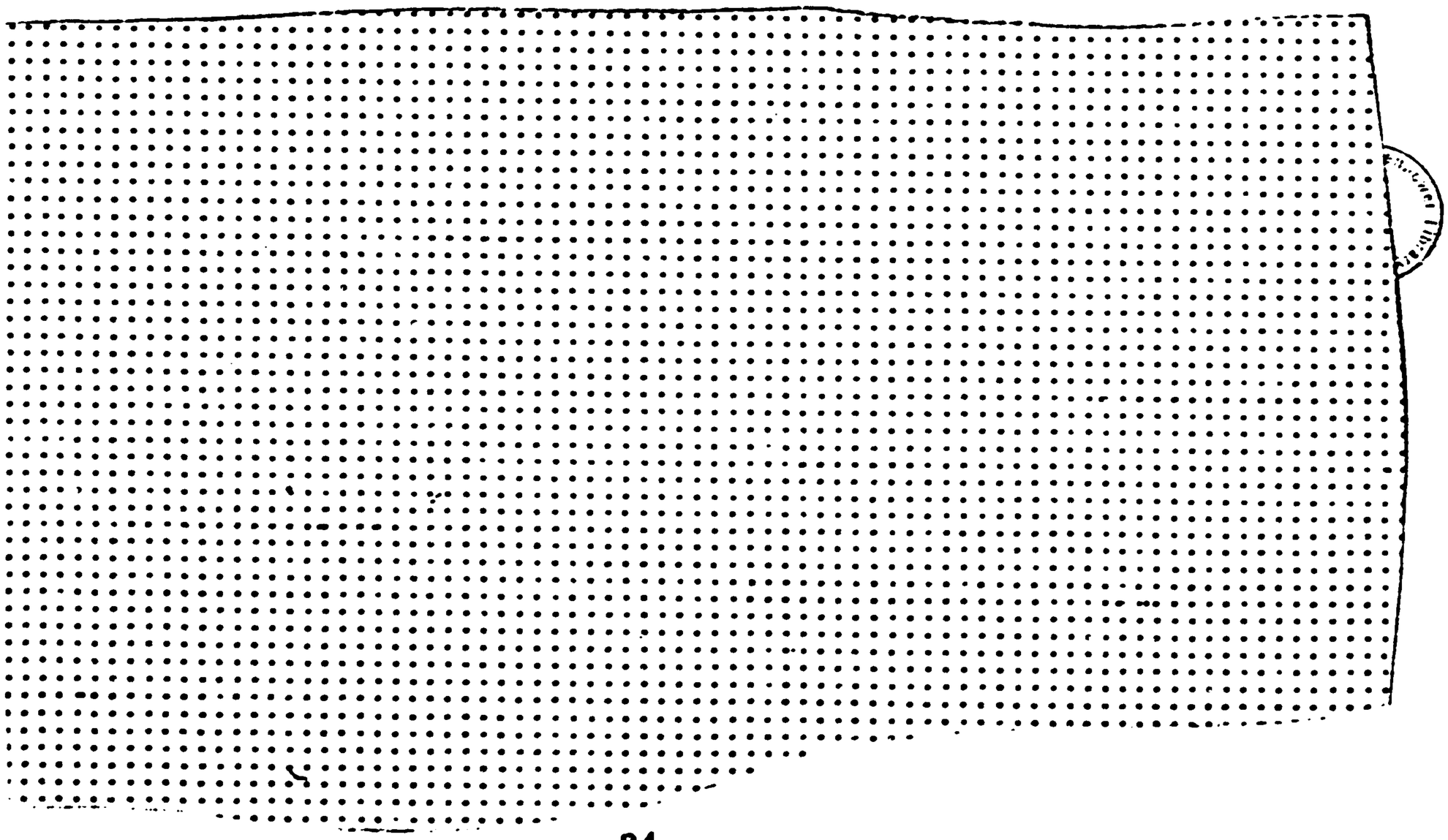
Membership in Communist parties everywhere has always been highly selective and exclusive, and is restricted and limited to those who pass its rigid membership requirements. In What Is to Be Done?, Lenin outlined his conception of the exclusiveness of the Communist Party by observing that "...the more we confine the membership of such an organization to people who are professionally engaged in revolutionary activity and who have been professionally trained in the art of combating the political police, the more difficult will it be to wipe out such an organization...." (Underscored word italicized in original) [22]

The Party assigns top priority to homogeneity and cohesion, and in this way facilitates total submission. The perfectly trained Communist can be counted on for automatic obedience; and the task of the Party's leaders and teachers is to produce him.

Bella V. Dodd, who was formerly a member of the national committee and the New York State committee of the Communist Party, tells how indoctrination made her a full-fledged Communist:

"...I accepted discipline and attended meetings. I gave a full measure of devotion to Party works, and I felt a deep attachment and loyalty to the people in its ranks. I considered myself as part of a group looking and driving toward the day when socialism would triumph.

"Even more significant was the fact that I had made their hates my hates. This was what established me as a full-fledged Communist. In the long ago I had been unable to hate anyone; I suffered desperately when someone was mistreated; I was regarded as a peacemaker. Now, little by little, I had acquired a whole mass of people to hate: the groups and individuals who fought the Party. How it came about I cannot tell. All I know as I look back to that time is that my mind had responded to Marxist conditioning. For it is a fact, true and terrible, that the Party establishes such authority over its members that it can swing their emotions now for and now against the same person or issue. It claims such sovereignty even over conscience as to dictate when it shall hate." [23]



The Communists' estimates of themselves are not modest, as is evident in this statement of Stalin:

> "We Communists are people of a special mould. We are made of special material. We are those who comprise the army of the great proletarian strategist, the army of Comrade Lenin. There is nothing higher than the honour to belong to this army...." [24]

[redacted]

B. Insulation and Absorption

[redacted]

Absorption is accomplished by organizational measures. The most obvious is the sheer volume of activity which frequently consumes all the member's available time, leaving little opportunity for thought beyond the moment, defining a way of life that is relinquished only with difficulty, and creating an immediate social context of Party affairs commanding the individual's entire span of attention.

Benjamin Gitlow, who was a top national official of the Communist Party, USA, until his expulsion in 1929, has described the complete absorption of a Communist's life in the movement:

> "The communist lives in a social organization all his own, which he holds above the social organization to which all other persons belong. His social organization is the movement, concretely the Party. Outside of the Party, outside of the communist movement, the communist has practically no social or personal life of his own. Whatever he does centers in the Communist party organization...."

"Practically every moment of a Party member's living day is spent in purposeful activity for the Communist party. The average Party member carries on Party work in the neighborhood in which he lives, among the tenants in his house; at the shop or office he has special communist duties to perform. If he is a union member, he attends union meetings, and Party faction meetings of the union to which he belongs. Most likely he is an officer and has additional responsibilities and meetings and conferences to take care of. After work he has Party meetings, conferences, demonstrations, picket lines to worry about. He also belongs to a communist fraternal organization, to a labor party, to a number of communist front organizations. To all he must give his time. Then, there is the Party school, cultural activities, lectures, dances, singing groups, dramatic groups in which he is active. Interspersed with all this activity are social affairs, parties, cocktail parties, card parties, run by the Party organization directly and by hundreds of organizations which cluster like huge bunches of grapes around the Party organization which acts as a powerful stem holding them all together. Lucky is the Party member who finds time to wipe his nose and catch more than three to four hours sleep a day.

"The Party member is too busy to think; he is too excited, too agitated. He keeps flitting about as the Party directs, at a feverish pace. He has no time to contemplate, to think or to worry about himself. The Party winds him up and keeps him going. Party life is hectic, but not dull. The Party member thrives on this activity."[25]

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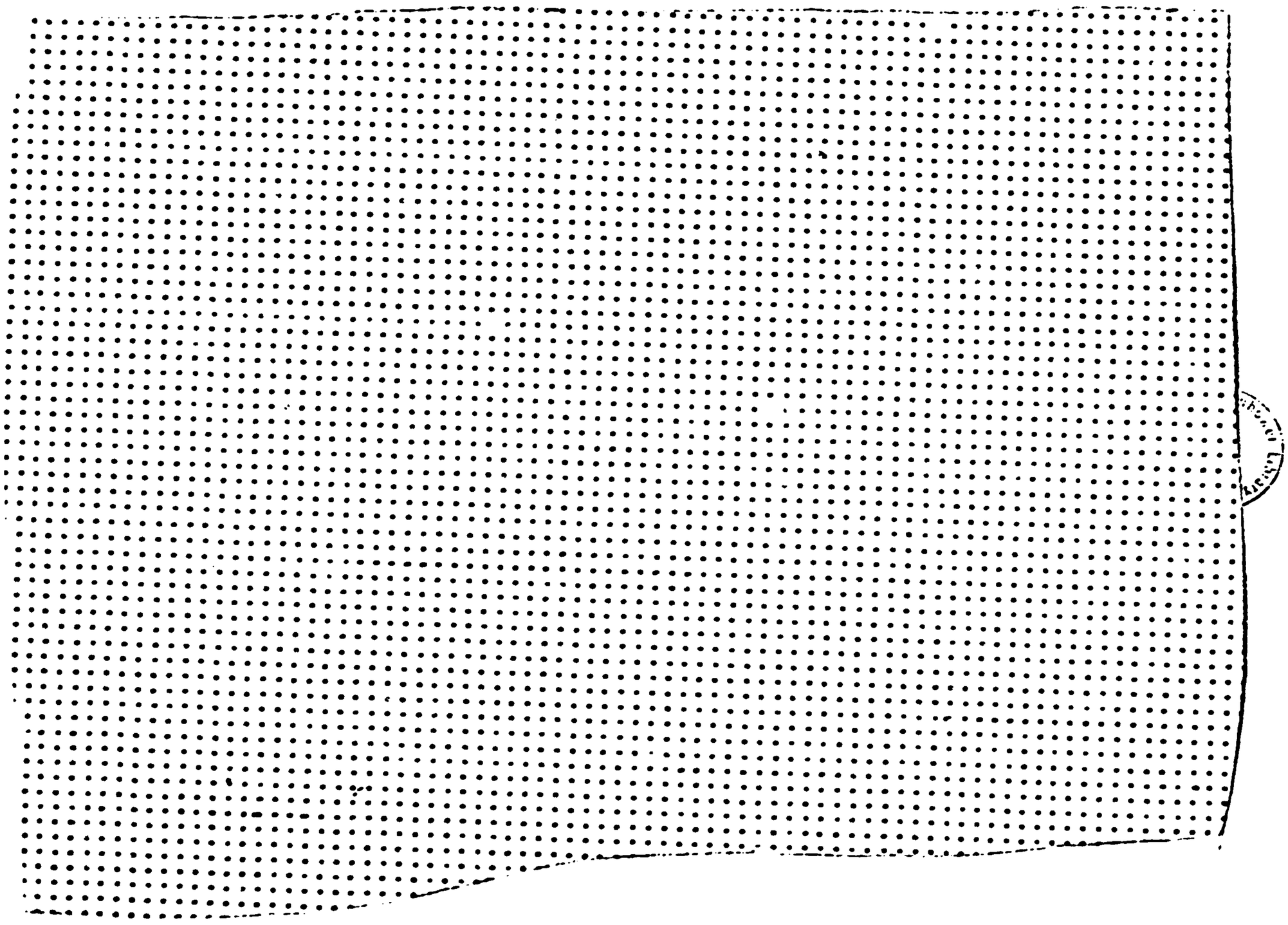
This high pitch of involvement gives the member a sense of meaningful activity--he is made to feel that he is achieving something, rather than passively waiting for the millennium. The total assimilation of the individual into the Party creates for some a genuine selflessness,

consecration and dedication. Complete absorption minimizes the chances for disaffection. It is likewise a potent method of securing the subordination of the individual to the Party and its leadership.

C. Loyalty and Fear

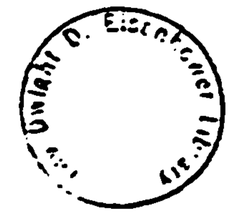
The Communist lives in permanent revolt and anger against the injustice of the world around him, declared Whittaker Chambers, who was once a member of the Communist Party:

"...But he will suffer almost any degree of injustice, stupidity and personal outrage from the party that he serves. He may fuss, whimper, harangue and even intrigue. But he will not act openly against the authority of the party. For to do so would be to breach discipline. And discipline is not only, to this great secular faith, what discipline is to an army. It is also what piety is to a church. To a Communist, a deliberate breach of discipline is an act of blasphemy. Only an intolerable situation can make it possible or even imaginable." 26



Jacob Golos, an important figure in the Communist underground in the United States in the 1930's, once told his associate, Elizabeth Bentley, that under Communist discipline, they were forbidden even to fall in love. [27]

The Communist bureaucrat, equally with the rank-and-file Party member, dreads above all things the danger of getting out of step with the national leadership. His task is to carry out the orders he receives, however foolish he may consider them and however little he may understand the reasons for them. No opportunity is offered for discussion, and thus, in theory at least, the question of divided opinions does not arise. When, despite the elimination of nonconformists by means of successive purges, diverse views do appear, the dissidents are either brought into line or expelled; and what usually happens is that they are brought into line.



Louis F. Budenz states that all the American Communist leaders with whom he became intimately acquainted had one common characteristic--they suffered from a form of fright. In off-the-record conferences

and in private discussions, he said this was very noticeable; "around each one of them there hung an atmosphere of mystery and suspicion, accompanied by this stigmata of fear." [28]

[redacted]

The total commitment to the Party on the part of its members is emphasized by a denial of the right of voluntary withdrawal. To leave the Party is not simply to dissociate oneself from a program, but is regarded as desertion in battle. This calls, in non-Communist countries, for the maximum penalty of expulsion, ostracism, economic boycott and defamation by the Communist Party.

*The Daily Worker is an east coast Communist newspaper.

III. TECHNIQUES OF ENFORCING DISCIPLINE

A. Party Vigilance

Angela Calomiris, a former member of the Communist Party, has noted that often an older Party member will flatter a suspected comrade by asking his candid opinion of a policy under discussion. If he gives an unfavorable opinion, his remarks are reported to Party authorities. The same provocative method of gathering evidence of Party disloyalty is more easily practiced by a secret Communist since subtle discussions on general topics can often trap a member into unorthodox sentiments he would never express to a person he knew was a fellow Communist. One of the Party's favorite checks is alleged to consist of getting a suspected comrade

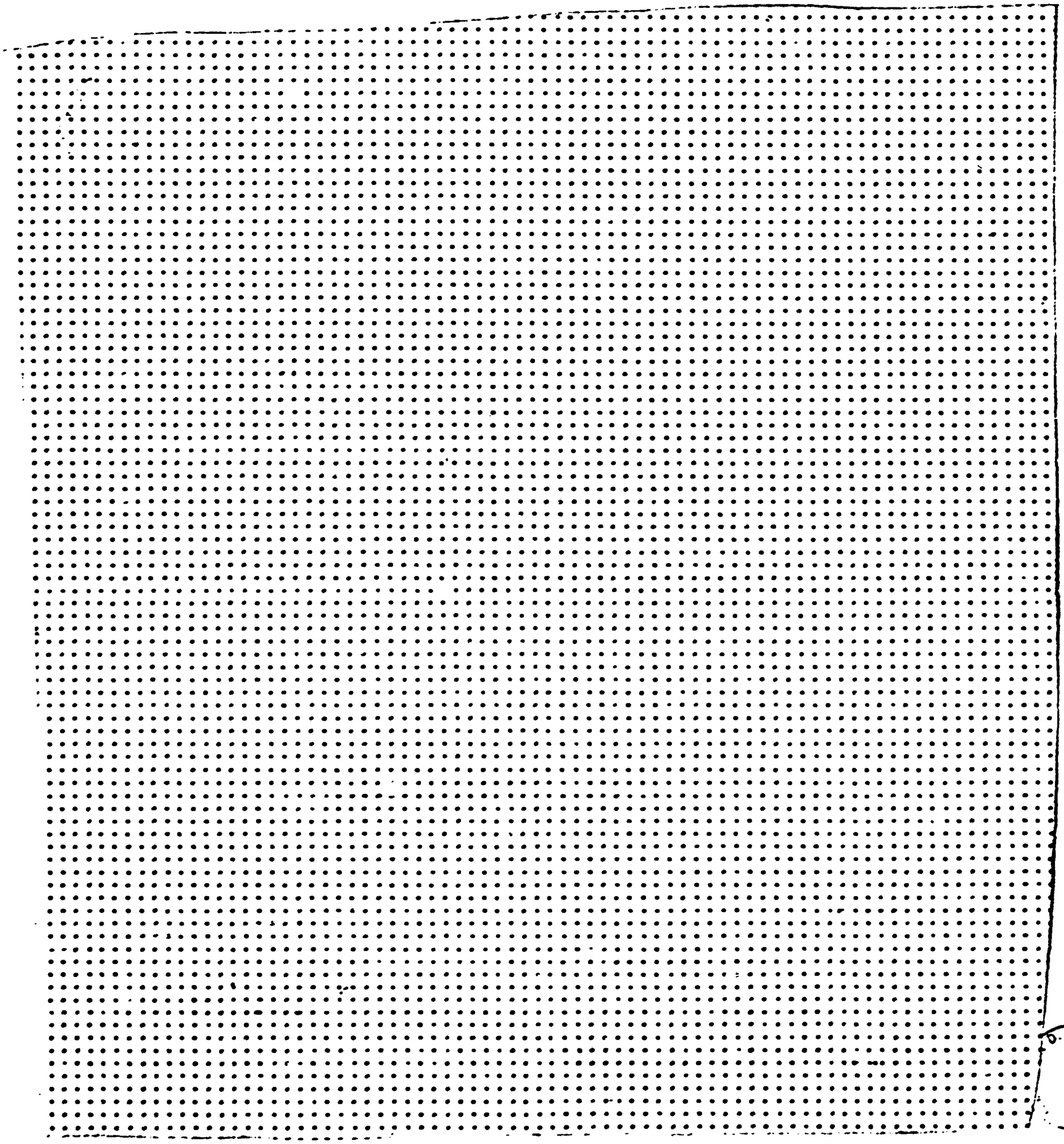
to fill out a number of different questionnaires at different times, and if they do not agree on some detail, the discrepancy is filed for future use against him. [29]

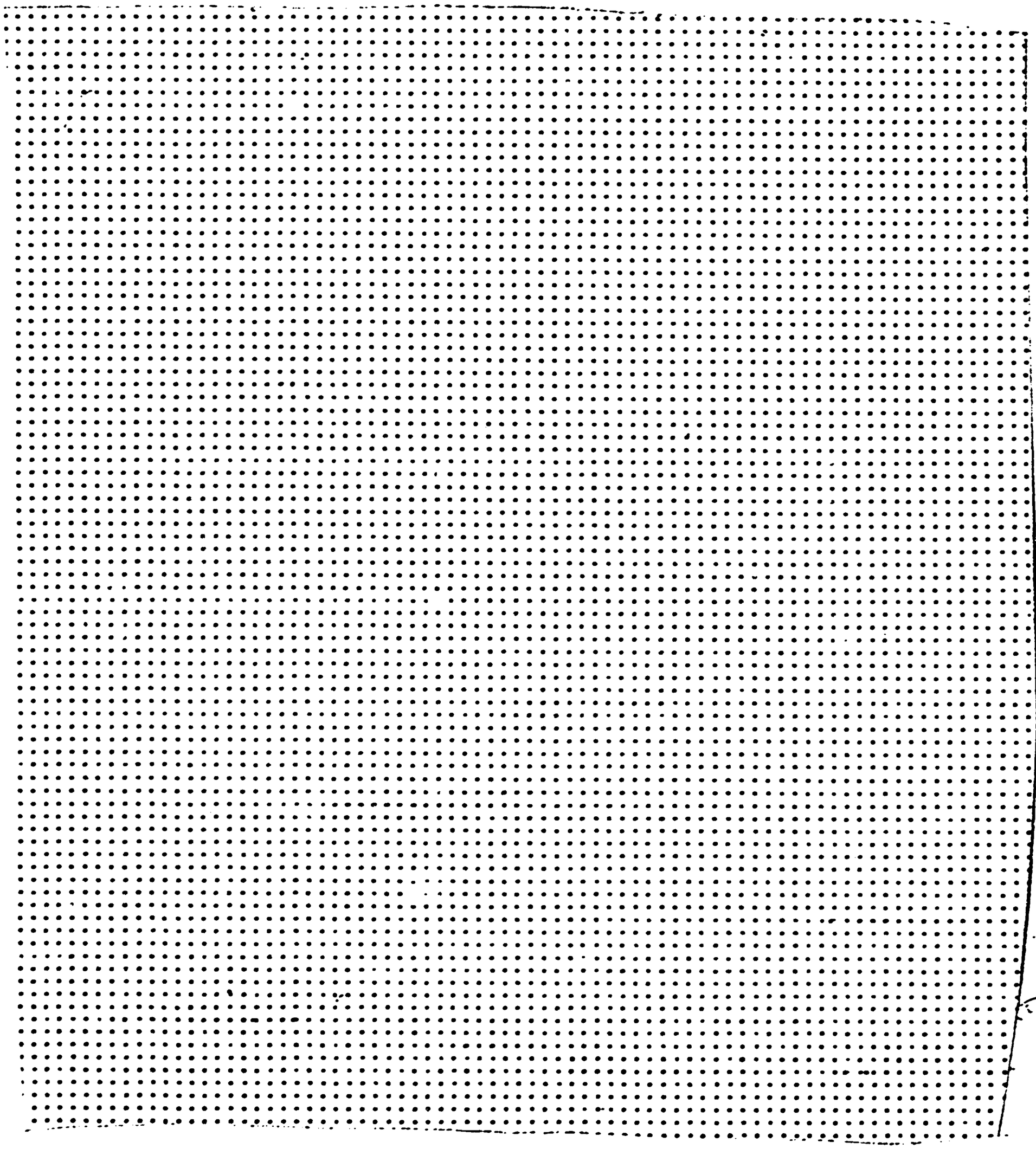
Gilbert Green, a member of the national committee of the Communist Party, USA, who jumped his bail in 1951 after being convicted of violating the Smith Act of 1940, warned of the need for Party vigilance in a report he made to a plenum of the national committee of the Communist Party, USA, in March, 1950:

> "...There has developed the petty-bourgeois notion that the political lives of people are separate from their personal lives. And so we do not check on the personal lives of our people, with the result that this weakness is also utilized by the enemy. We must return to the old yardstick that an unstable person in his or her personal life, is sooner or later going to show instability in his political life. Had the Party leadership in Pittsburgh paid close attention to the personal lives and behaviors of the Cvetics, had it known how they lived and how they made their living, what their background and friends were, when and how and why they joined the Party--they never could have bored so deeply or for so long a period. For, they were living double lives which could stand no such close scrutiny.
>
> "As was pointed out with regard to the stoolpigeon Lautner, had there been any check-up or control of his work, he could have been exposed long ago...." [30]

The program set up the jurisdictional and prccedural aspects governing trials of members subjected to disciplinary action; members under psychiatric observation and treatment; and members suspected as stool pigeons or Trotskyites. The objective of the program was to be carried out by bringing to the Party membership at large such lessons as were learned from those disciplinary hearings. For example, where "enemy agents" were discovered, it was deemed imperative that a thorough investigation be made as to how such persons entered the Party, how they operated within the ranks, the identity of their associates and friends, and whether their activities were covered up to prevent or hinder their detection.

As part of this program to screen out pctential informers, malcontents and misfits from those members who were seeking to reactivate themselves in the Party, a lengthy questionnaire was utilized upon interview of such individuals. The questionnaire, covering background data of the individual, Party history and present activities, sought to be soul-searching in scope. The questions were designed to elicit from the prospective member any information which might preclude him from readmission into the Party.





C. Disciplinary Action

1. Purpose and Need

The severity of Communist discipline cannot be obscured by any nebulous phrases which Communists may use about voluntary submission and the like. Communists believe in the rule of the iron fist, and recommend severe, even extreme, ruthless disciplinary measures whenever they feel that Communism will benefit by it.

Lenin insisted that iron discipline must be maintained, and that any person either inside or outside the Communist Party who interferes with or in any way injures the Communist movement has to be severely disciplined. "There is not," he said, "nor can there be,...any sentimentality." [31]

Whenever a member acts in an undisciplined, irresponsible, careless, factional or anti-Party manner, whether consciously or unconsciously, such an individual is called to task, criticized by the Party, and asked to explain his actions. In this fashion, the Party endeavors to correct these errors and to ascertain whether mere errors have been committed or whether the individual is actually an "enemy" of the Party.

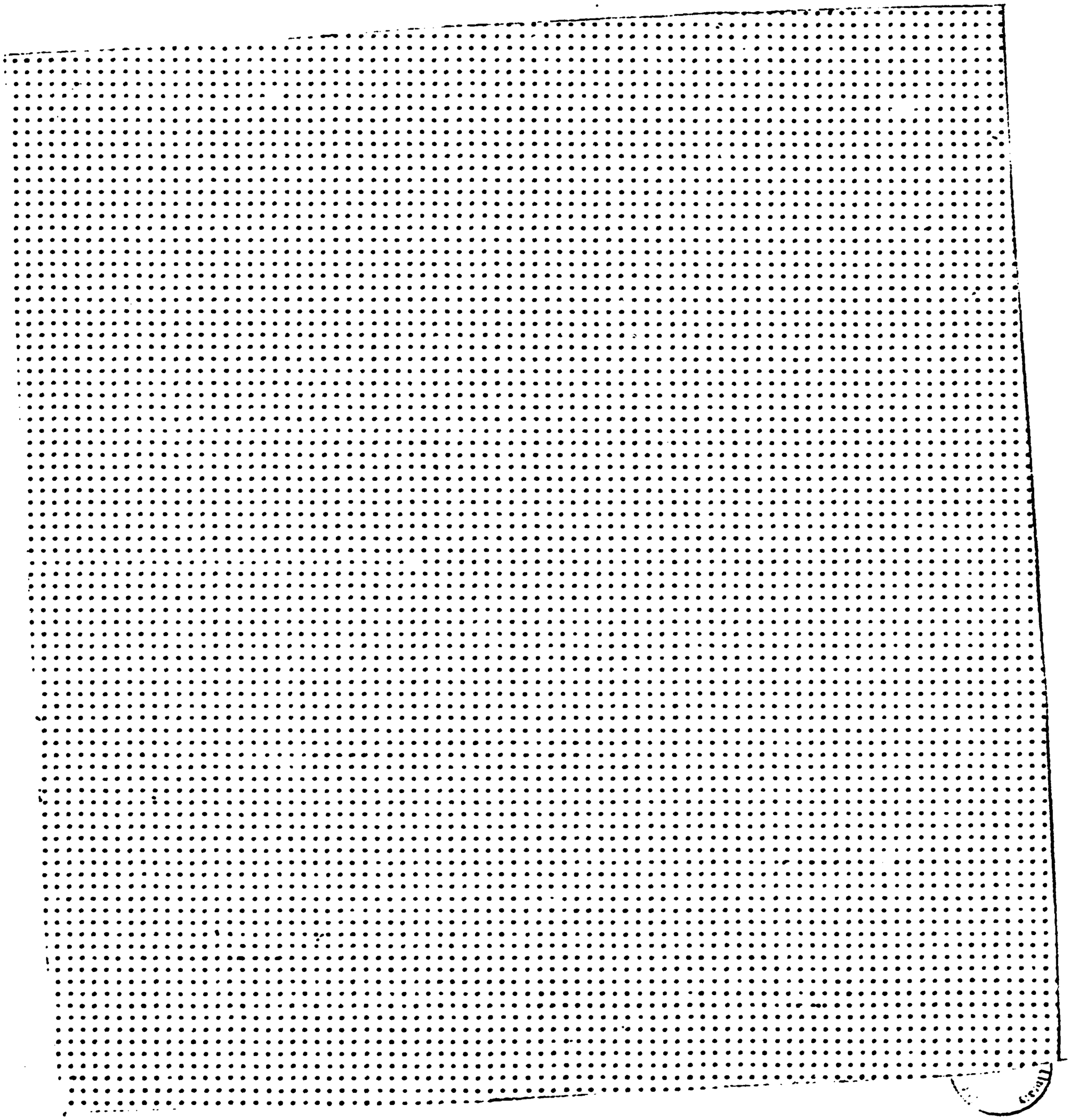
2. Breaches of Discipline

Offenses which have constituted breaches of discipline in the Communist Party in the United States since its formation in 1919, are defined and described, in essence, in the following sections of Article VIII of the current constitution of the Party:

> "Section 2. Conduct or action detrimental to the working class and the nation, as well as to the interests of the Party, violation of decisions of its leading committees or of this constitution, financial irregularities, or other conduct unbecoming a member of the Party, may be punished by censure, removal from posts of leadership, or by expulsion from membership. Such conduct or action by any committee may be punished by removal of the committee by the State or National Committee, which shall then order new elections for said committee.
>
> "Section 3. Any member shall be expelled from the Party who is found to be a strikebreaker, provocateur, engaged in espionage, or who advocates force and violence or terrorism, or who adheres to or participates in the activities of any group or party which conspires or acts to subvert, undermine, weaken or overthrow any or all institutions of American democracy through which the majority of the American people can maintain their right to determine their destinies.

"Section 4. The practice or advocacy of any form of racial, national or religious discrimination shall be grounds for expulsion from membership.

"Section 5. Personal or political relations with enemies of the working class and nation are incompatible with membership in the Communist Party." [32]



All the constitutions of the Communist Party, USA, including the present, have stipulated that charges against individual members can be made by other individual members or by Party committees. Charges are supposed to be made in writing and to be as specific and as detailed as

Every accused member is presumed to have the right to a hearing before any disciplinary action can be taken against him. The purpose of such a proceeding is to establish the essential facts in the case through interrogation, documents and witnesses, and to give the accused an opportunity to present his side.

Members preferring charges, as well as accused members, are entitled to present witnesses, but such witnesses must meet with the approval of the investigating committee hearing the case. These witnesses, moreover, must be Party members.

A hearing ostensibly determines whether the charges are groundless or if there is substance to the accusations. In the event of the latter, the investigating committee may propose one or more forms of disciplinary measures which will be described in detail in a later section.

After concluding the hearing, the investigating committee turns over all documents, including its own report, to the parent body. The report consists of: (1) the charges, (2) the facts of the case, (3) a brief evaluation of the accused and the allegations, and (4) recommendations. After the parent body has made its decision, all material and documents are turned over to the respective review commission.

The facts surrounding the [redacted] is an interesting commentary on the Party's callous disregard for the elaborate and explicit provisions relative to charges, hearings and other disciplinary procedures provided for in the Party's numerous constitutions and other official documents during the last 36 years.

[redacted]

Lautner met Kling in the designated city and there was taken to the basement of a house where he was confronted with two individuals whom he later identified as Communist Party functionaries in that area. Among other things, he was charged with having conspired to train and move Titoists from Bari, Italy, to Yugoslavia during World War II, and of having spied for an American intelligence agency. Lautner was completely surprised and dumbfounded at these accusations and pleaded innocence. The

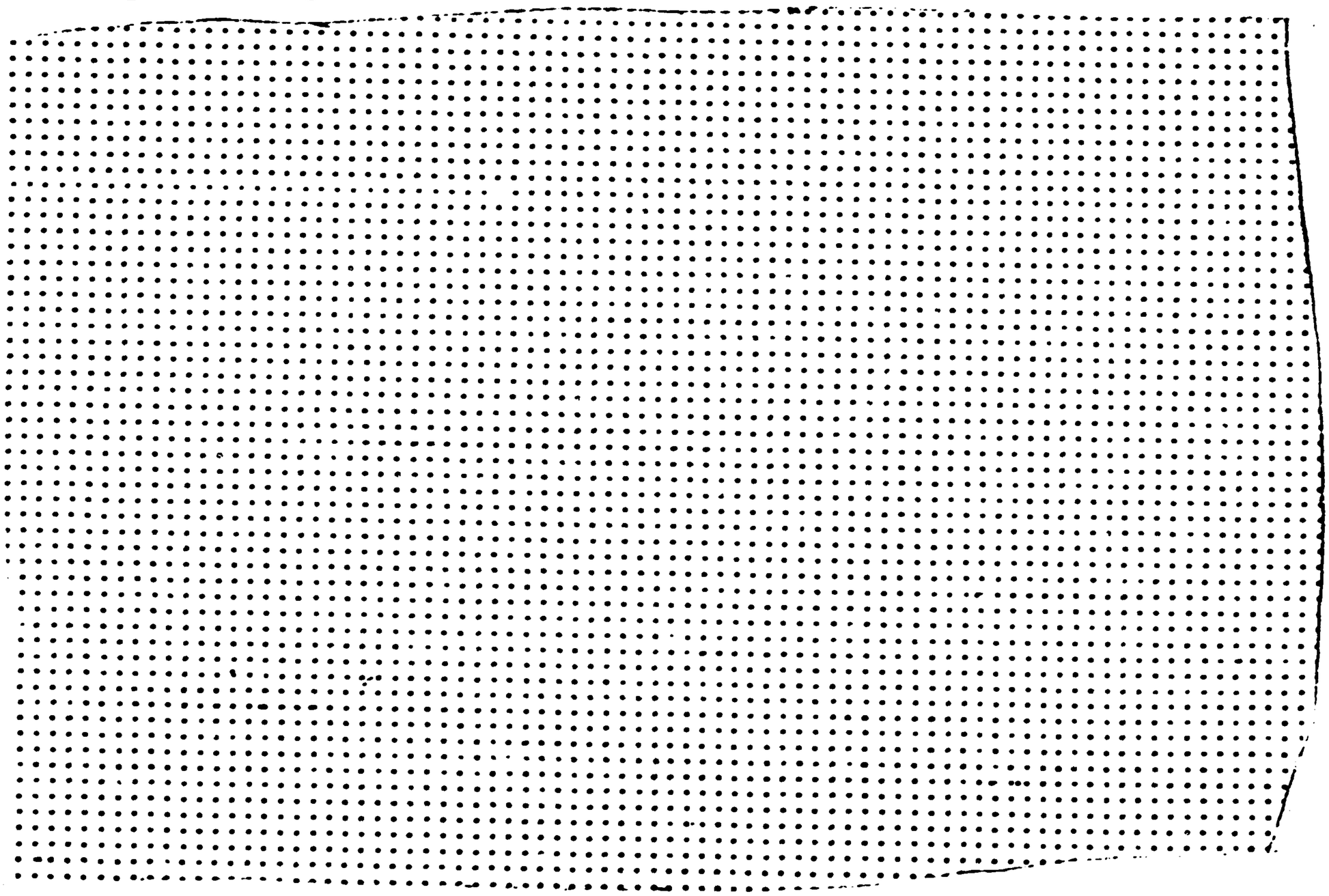
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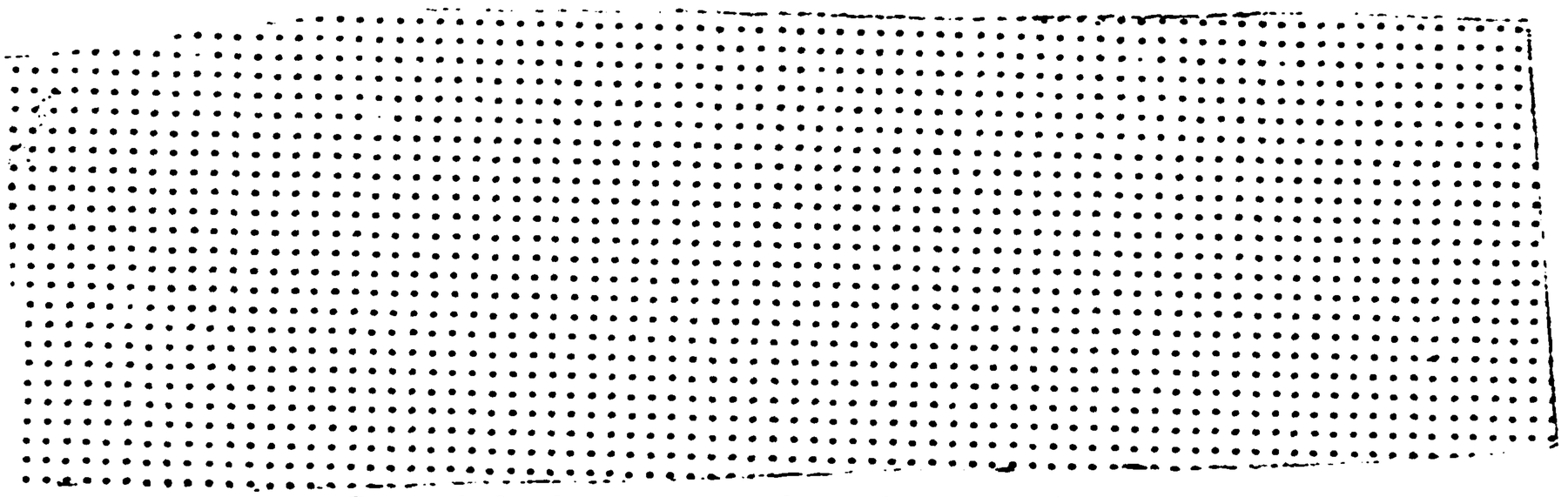
According to the current constitution, all expelled or other disciplined members are entitled to appeal to the next higher body up to the national convention, whose decision is final. While the appeal is pending, members must adhere to the decision already rendered. Appeals must be in writing and are submitted through the club chairman.

7. Forms of Disciplinary Measures

b. Removal from Responsible Positions

to another, from one section to another, or sometimes from one kind of work to another. It may result in a state, county or section official being demoted to a rank-and-file member, or in a curtailment of his work. At the end of the control period, if the individual has satisfactorily demonstrated that he has fulfilled the tasks assigned to him, he may be restored to his old status; if not, he will likely remain an ordinary member or be susceptible to expulsion.





One of the best examples of removal from responsible positions was that which took place in New York City in 1949, when the New York State committee of the Communist Party announced, in the Daily Worker, the removal of Isidore Begun, Robert Appel and Bernard Shuldiner who, in the order named, were chairman, secretary and a section organizer of the Bronx county organization of the Communist Party. They were removed, it was stated, for their failure to "struggle against white chauvinism and for Negro rights." [33]

In addition to the removal of the three leaders, the Bronx county committee was severely censured for its inability to carry out the Party line on the Negro question. The announcement said that control tasks had been given to Begun, Appel and Shuldiner, and that the state committee had confidence in their ability to quickly rehabilitate themselves and earn again the right to leadership. Eleven months later, the state



committee announced, again in the Daily Worker, that these three individuals had completed their control assignments in a responsible manner and had consequently been restored to their former posts.[34]

d. Expulsion

Earl Browder once stated that the Communist Party, by expelling a member, was recognizing the fact that that member, by his

activities and opinions, had politically separated himself from the Party, and this act was merely an organizational registration of that political fact. [35]

(1) Causes

(a) General

The current constitution of the Communist Party, USA, contains the following grounds for expulsion under Article VIII:

> "Section 3. Any member shall be expelled from the Party who is found to be a strikebreaker, provocateur, engaged in espionage, or who advocates force and violence or terrorism, or who adheres to or participates in the activities of any group or party which conspires or acts to subvert, undermine, weaken or overthrow any or all institutions of American democracy through which the majority of the American people can maintain their right to determine their destinies.
>
> "Section 4. The practice or advocacy of any form of racial, national or religious discrimination shall be grounds for expulsion from membership.
>
> "Section 5. Personal or political relations with enemies of the working class and nation are incompatible with membership in the Communist Party." [36]

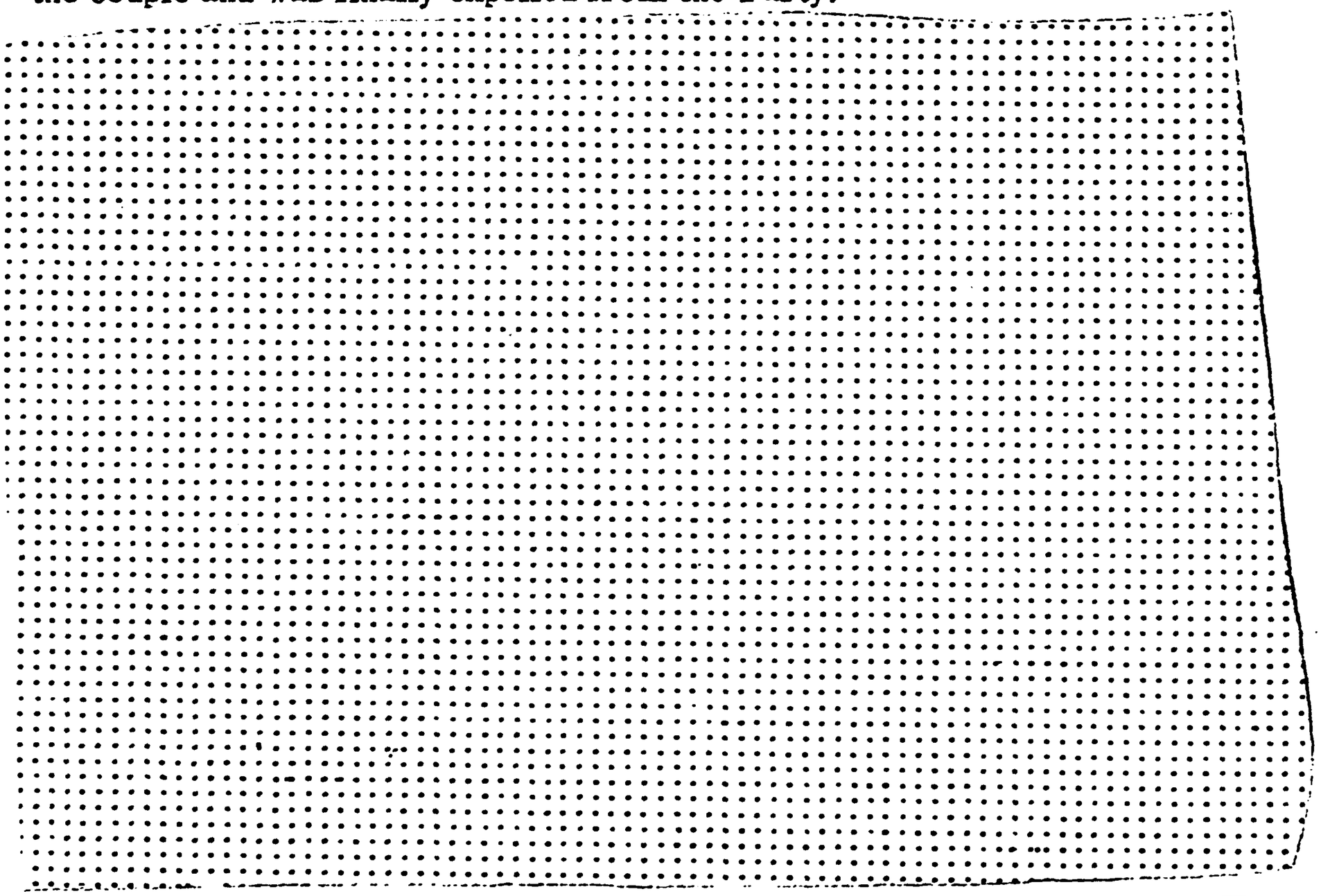
Party constitutions of the past have embodied similar provisions as, for example, those contained in the constitution adopted in 1938:

> "...Party members found to be strikebreakers, degenerates, habitual drunkards, betrayers of Party confidence, provocateurs, advocates of terrorism and violence as a method of Party procedure, or members whose actions are

detrimental to the Party and the working class, shall be summarily dismissed from positions of responsibility, expelled from the Party and exposed before the general public." 37

Family relationship and even association with an expelled member is frequently sufficient cause to precipitate the expulsion of another member. When the New York State committee of the Communist Party expelled Ben Bordofsky in 1951 for serious financial irregularities in connection with his position as head of the New York State literature department of the Party, the committee also expelled his wife for the reason that "...while not participating in the acts of her husband, she put up no struggle against or challenged her husband regarding the source of his income. She knew their standard of living to be way above what was warranted by what Bordofsky received in wages."[38]

member continued her association with them and, as a result, came into disfavor with officials. She was given a control task as a test to determine her attitude and degree of co-operation with the Party. She promised not to see the couple again and within six months she was again in the Party's good graces. Soon thereafter, however, she resumed her association with the couple and was finally expelled from the Party.



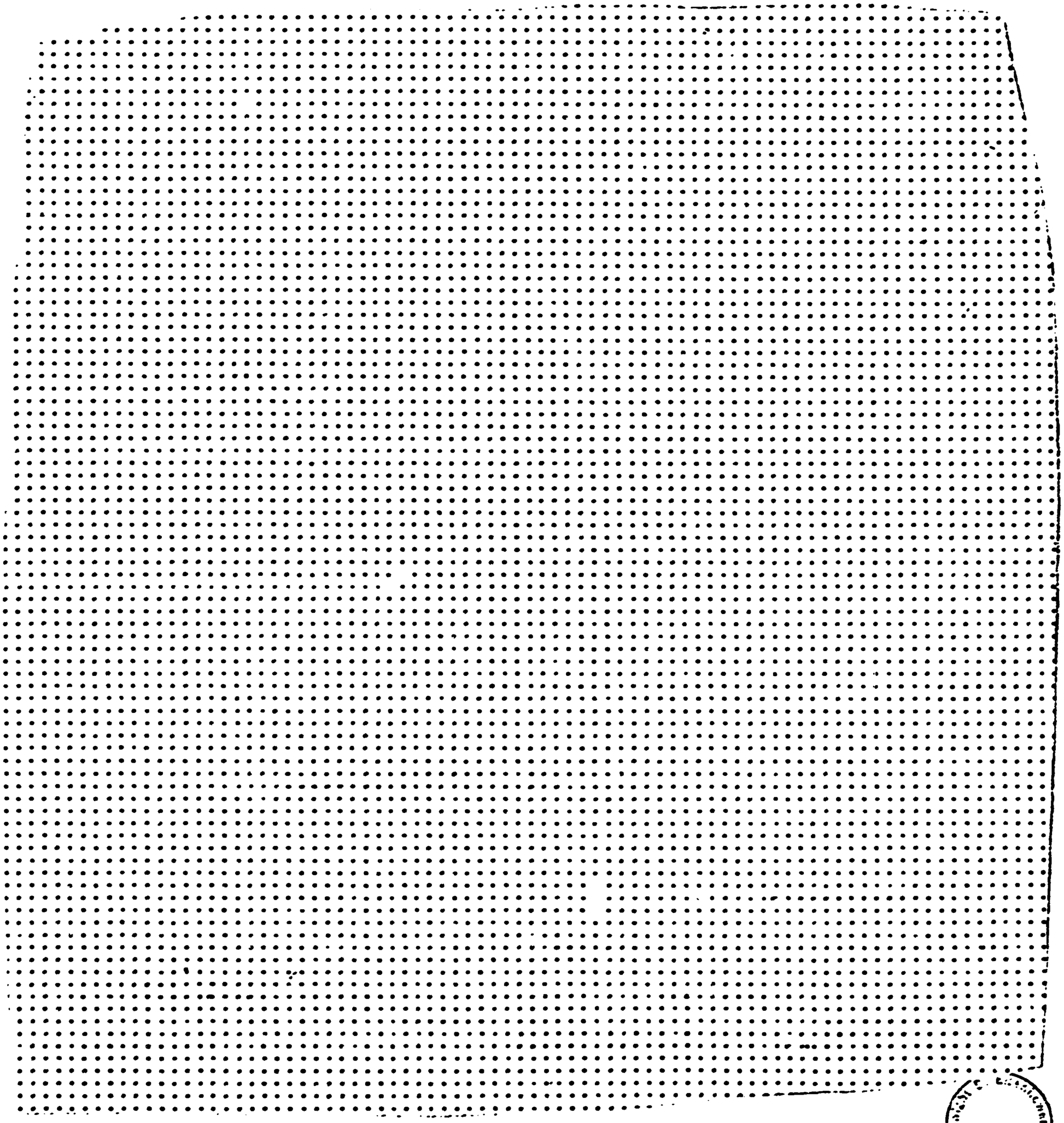
but the Party confirmed its suspicions that he was an informer when he was observed taking extensive notes at Party meetings.

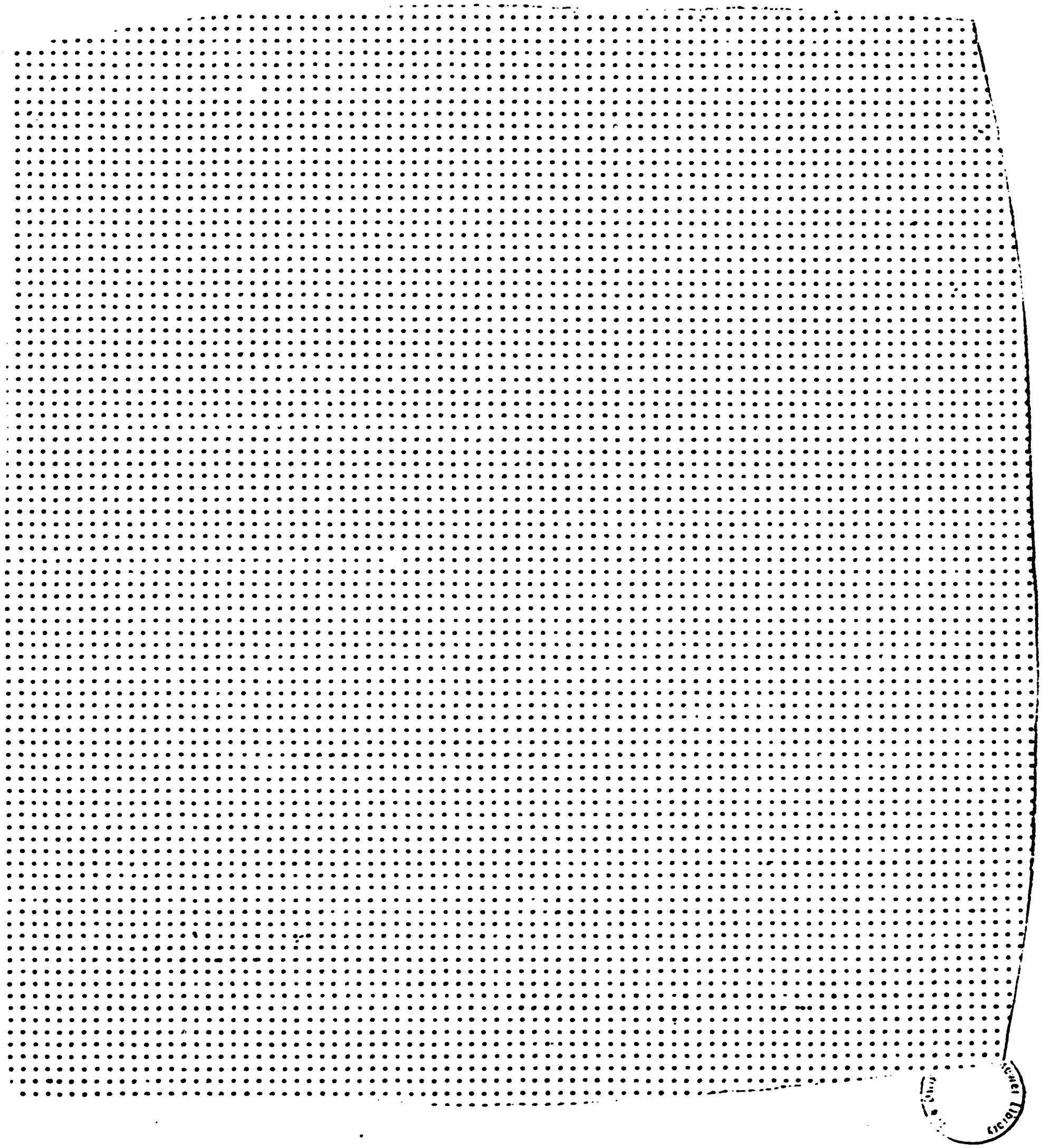
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(b) Factionalism

The Communist movement has long been cognizant that factional divisions and groupings constitute the greatest possible danger to its growth and success. Stalin, in a speech in 1929, warned of the harmfulness of factionalism in the ranks of Communist Parties:

> "First and foremost because factionalism weakens the sense of Party spirit, dulls revolutionary sensitiveness, and blindfolds the Party leaders to such an extent that in their factional enthusiasm they are bound to place factional interests...above the interests of the working class...."
>
> . . . . . .
>
> "Secondly, because factionalism interferes with the education of the Party in the spirit of principles, it interferes with the training of cadres in the spirit of honest, proletarian, incorruptible revolutionaries, free from rotten diplomacy and unprincipled machinations...."
>
> . . . . . .
>
> "Thirdly, because factionalism, weakening the Party's desire for unity and undermining the Party's iron discipline, gives rise in the Party to such a specifically factional regime under which all its internal life is exposed to the eyes of the class foe, and the Party itself is in danger of becoming a plaything in the hands of the agents of the bourgeoisie...."
>
> . . . . . .
>
> "Finally, because the harmfulness of factionalism lies in the fact that factionalism undermines the basis of all positive work in the Party, kills the desire of Party members to concern themselves with questions of everyday needs of the working class..., weakens the activities of the Party in the organization of the working class for the class war with the bourgeoisie and thus creates a situation in which the Party's prestige must inevitably decline in the eyes of the workers, and the workers, instead of flocking to the Party in whole detachments, are compelled to leave the ranks of the Party...." [39]
> (Underscored words italicized in original)





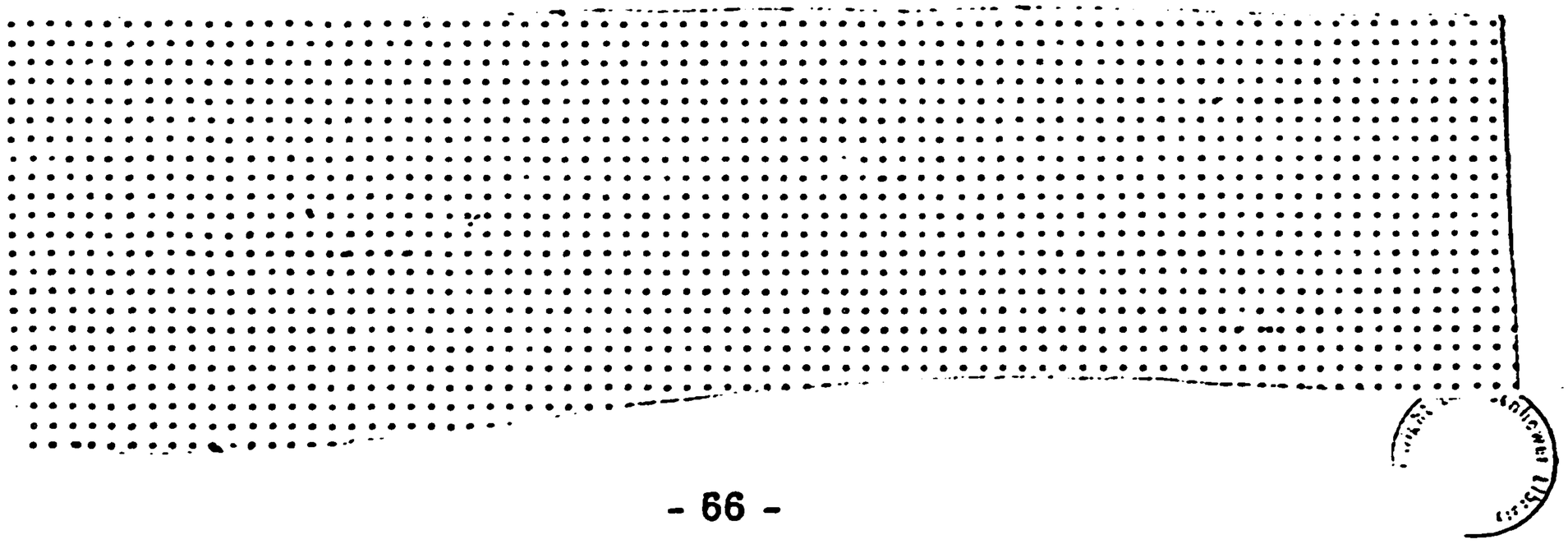
In May, 1929, Lovestone and some of his adherents then in Russia were asked to give their endorsement to a document which the Comintern had decided to send to the American Communist Party. Since this directive was nothing more than a condemnation of the Lovestone group, Lovestone and his supporters refused to approve it. As a consequence, Lovestone was removed from all his positions in the American Party and was instructed to remain in Moscow. Several weeks later, without the knowledge or consent of the Comintern, he left Moscow and returned to the United States.

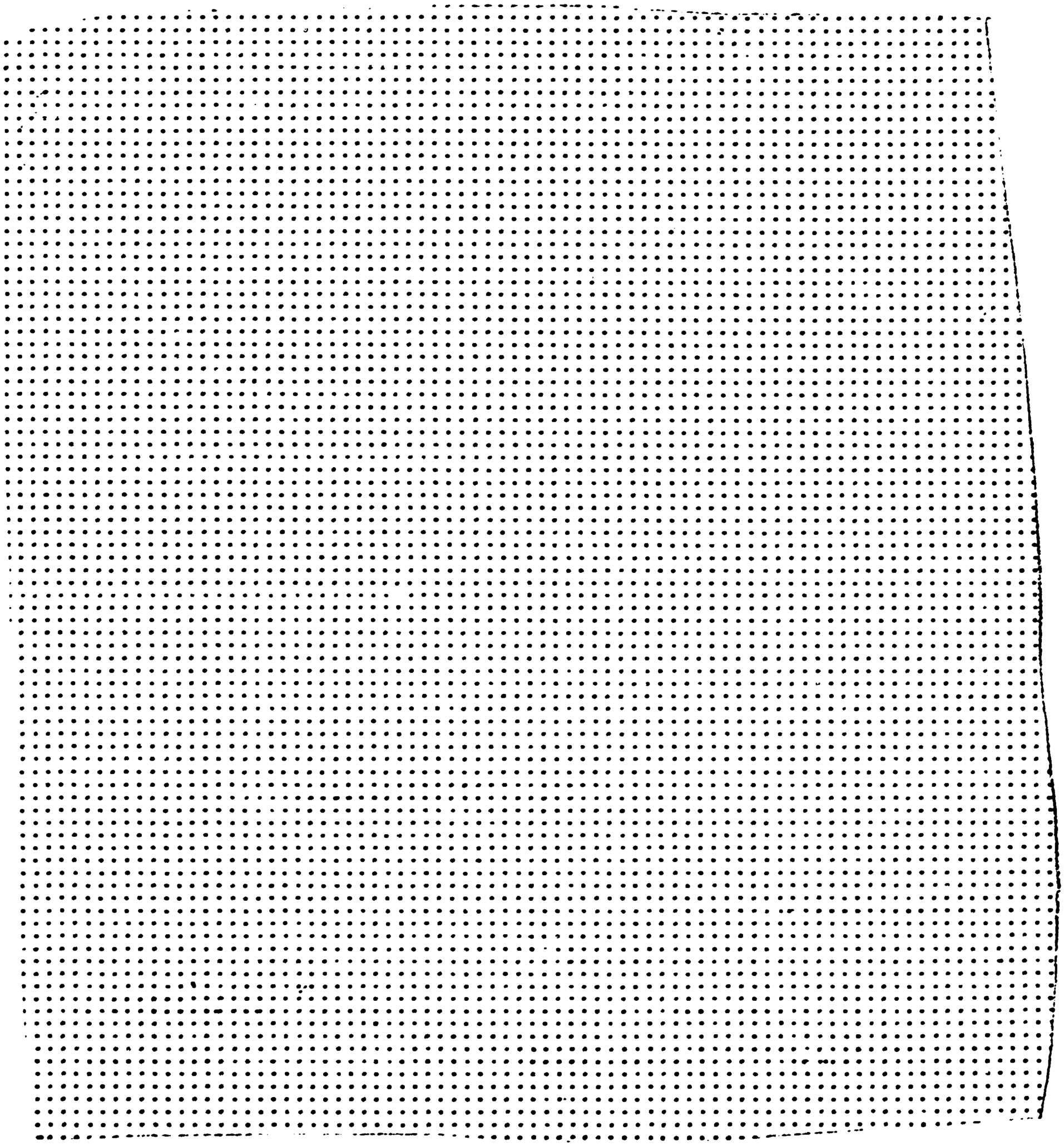
Lovestone was immediately expelled by the central committee of the Communist Party, USA, for this breach of discipline. In its

statement of expulsion, the committee asserted that he had departed from Moscow prematurely and without authority, and by this action had "defied" the decisions of the executive committee of the Comintern and thus had "violated the discipline of the Comintern, despite previous warning, in the most flagrant manner." The statement further declared that "...in expelling Lovestone, who has become a renegade to the cause of Communism, the Central Committee and the entire Party will mercilessly fight to destroy any of his attempts and maneuvers to splitting the Party...." [40]

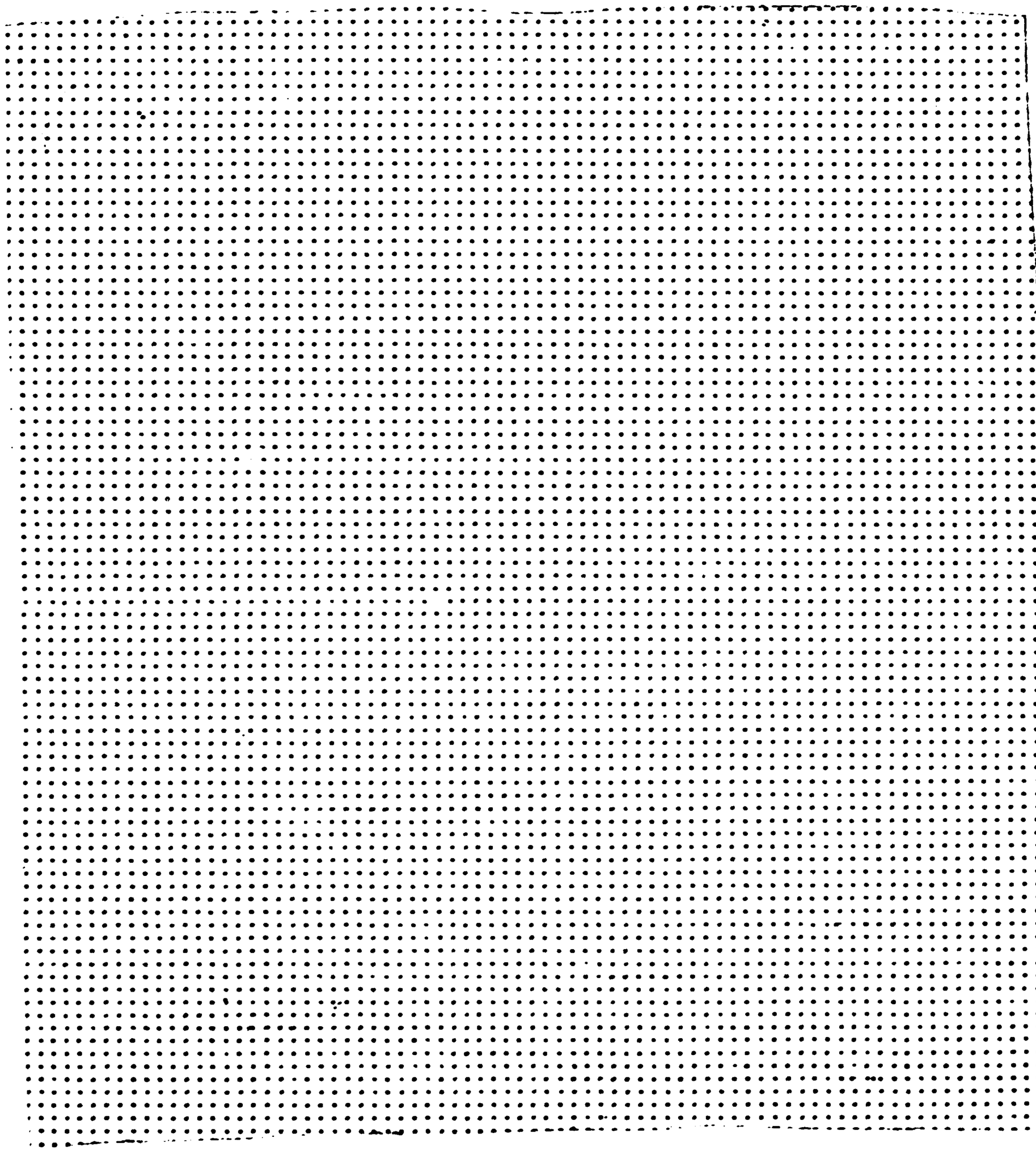
Lovestone appealed his ouster but to no avail. The central committee, in rejecting his appeal, stated in part:

> "...The Party needs the univided loyalty of all its members; Lovestone ridicules Party loyalty, accuses those loyal to the Party of treachery to his faction, and raises factional loyalty upon the pedestal of revolutionary virtue. The Party needs an iron discipline; Lovestone does everything in his power to undermine Party discipline and to replace it with factional discipline...." [41]





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by the Yonkers club on February 12, 1946. A day later, the national committee approved this action in the following resolution:

"1. The National Committee has considered and approves the recommendation of the National Board, and the demand from the ranks of our Party organizations, that Earl Browder be expelled from the Communist Party for gross violation of Party discipline and decisions, for active opposition to the political line and leadership of our Party, for developing factional activity and for betraying the principles of Marxism-Leninism and deserting to the side of the class enemy--American monopoly capital.

"2. The National Committee categorically rejects the document presented today by Earl Browder, in which he appeals to the National Committee against his expulsion. Browder's appeal in itself confirms the correctness of the charges preferred against him by the Board. Moreover, Browder's appeal is nothing more or less than an anti-Marxist platform of struggle submitted by a social-imperialist who aims to wage political-ideological warfare against the Communist Party, against Marxism. Therefore, the National Committee hereby and does expel Earl Browder from the Communist Party.

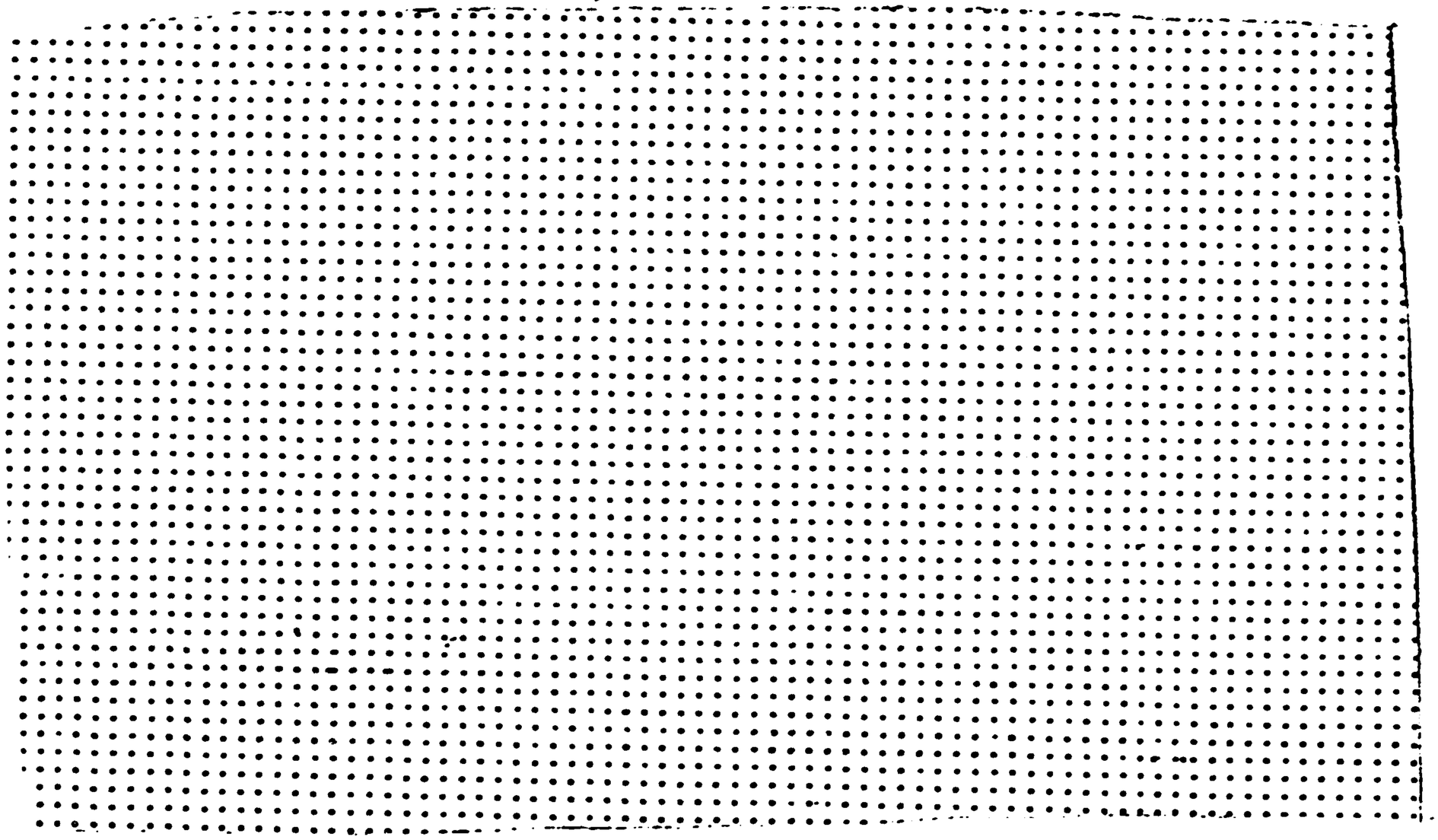
"3. The struggle against Browder and Browderism now enters a new stage. The struggle against Browder and Browderism is no longer a struggle against a trend in the Communist and labor movements. It is now a struggle against a deserter from Communism, against an alien ideology and influence.

"The entire Party must be on guard against the factional activity which Browder is now trying to organize..."

. . . . . .

"The Party must be vigilant to preserve and strengthen the unity of the Party. It must root out all vestiges of revisionism and all rotten liberal attitudes towards Browder and the conciliators of Browderism. It must wage an uncompromising political-ideological struggle against Browderism which is an enemy class ideology.

"In this way our Party can and will strengthen itself ideologically, politically and organizationally. It will equip itself rapidly to become a mass party, and more effectively perform its vanguard role today and in the great economic and political struggles which lie ahead." [42]



The University of Texas Austin

of every possible calumny and vilification its leaders could concoct and devise. He has been branded a "renegade from Marxism," a "class enemy," an "opportunist," a "revisionist," a "factionalist," a "Wall Street apologist," and a "troubadour of American imperialism."

(c) White Chauvinism

Communists use the phrase "white chauvinism" as a mark of disrespect, contempt and loathing toward any person presumed to be guilty of believing that the white race is superior to other races, especially the Negro race. Theoretically, Communists claim to seek social, cultural, economic and political equality for all races, colors and creeds; fundamentally, they play upon white chauvinism like so many other issues, as a tactic to stir up race hatred, discord and anything else which will spread Communism.

The presence and manifestation of white chauvinism within the ranks of the Communist Party has always been of concern to the Party, but white chauvinism was made a primary issue after World War II.

In 1953, Communist Party leaders reportedly recognized that the situation had reached a ridiculous stage; Negro Communists were

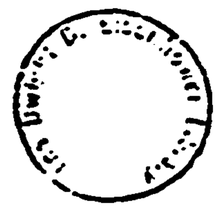
being put in a "touch-me-not" category and members were hesitant to criticize them politically or otherwise for fear of being branded white chauvinists. William Z. Foster warned against this rampant left sectarianism in the Party's fight against white chauvinism in an article he wrote for Political Affairs in July, 1953. Since then, the Party is said to have returned to a somewhat more sane and sensible attitude and policy on this question. [43]

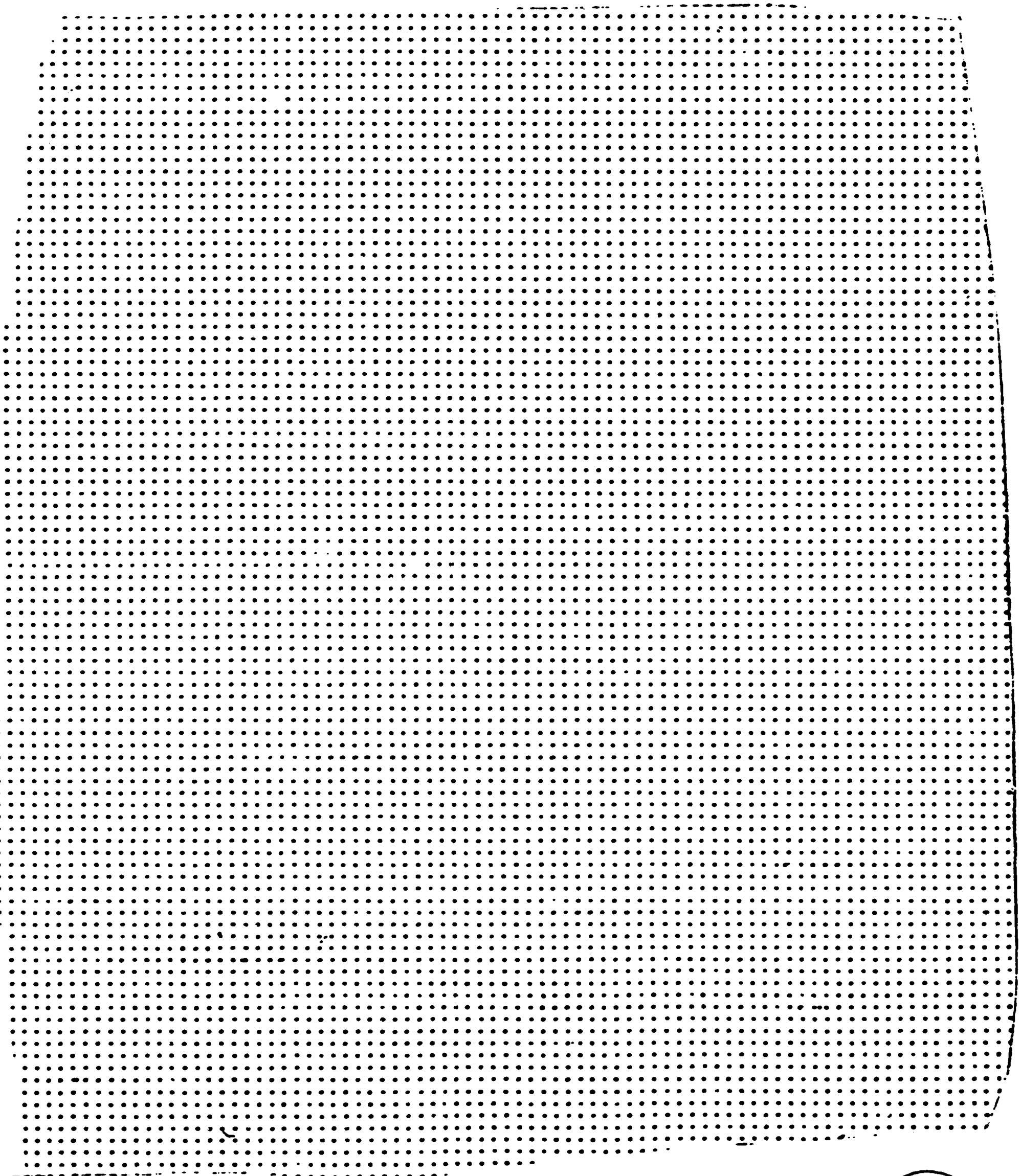
Political Affairs was characterized as the theoretical organ of the Communist Party by Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, a member of the national committee of the Communist Party, USA, in her testimony at her Smith Act trial in October, 1952.

[redacted]

A varied and lengthy list of reasons is ordinarily cited in support of an expulsion, apparently to give the impression of overwhelming and incontrovertible evidence in substantiation of such action. This was true when the Party expelled Bella V. Dodd in 1949. She had once been a member of the national committee and the New York State committee. The following reasons were enumerated to justify her expulsion:

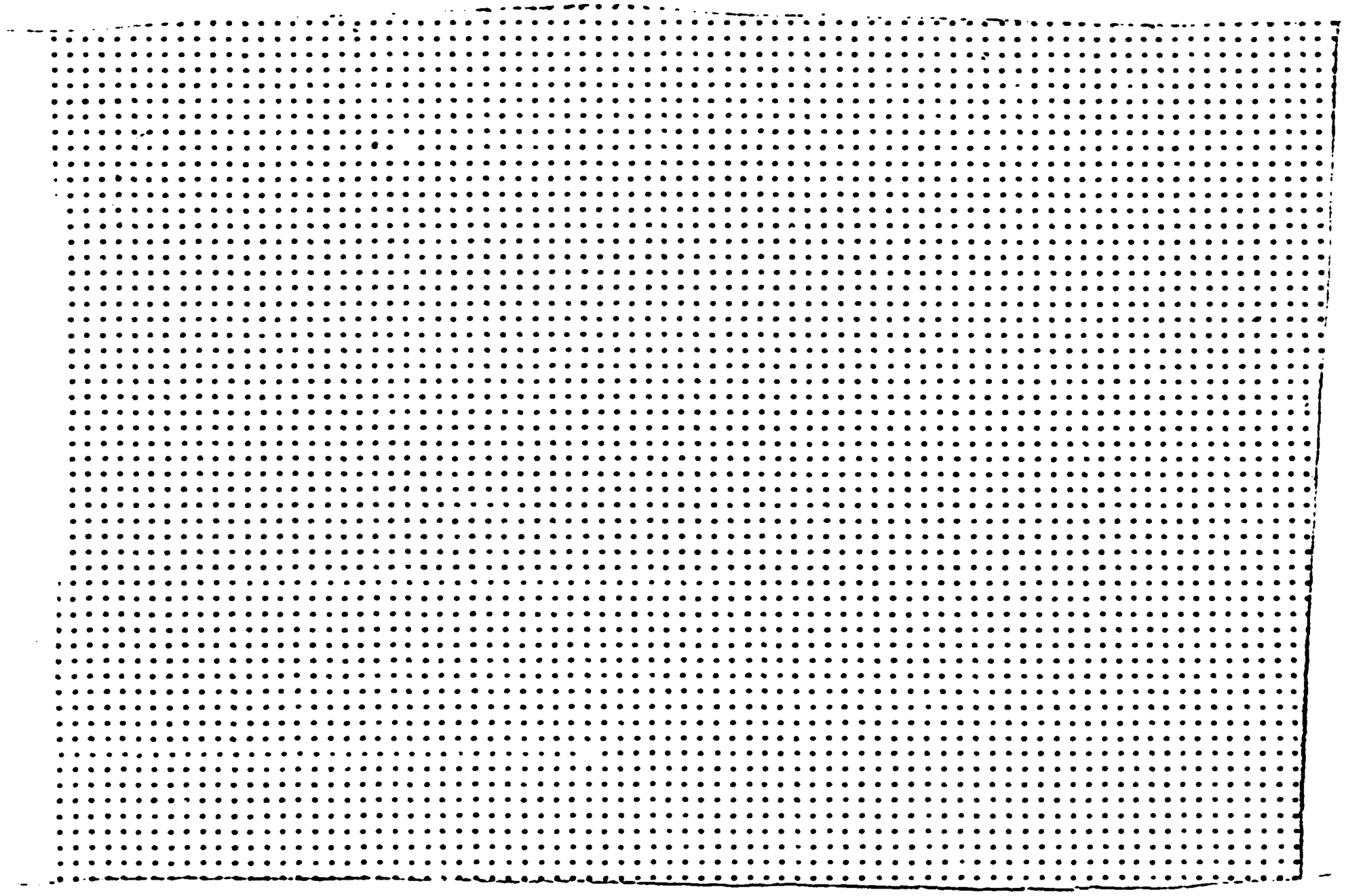
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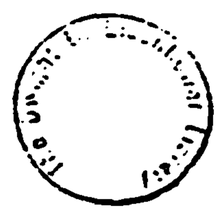
(3) Types of Expulsion

"Wood claims he is making an effort to understand the seriousness of his mistakes and weaknesses. If this should prove to be the case, the New York State Committee believes it is possible for Wood to rehabilitate himself as a working class force and usefully serve the cause of the working class." 44



Outright expulsion signifies that the member is considered to be an enemy of the Party and the working class. There is an unequivocal finality to this form of expulsion, which is illustrated in the expulsion statement of the Washington State board of the Communist Party relative to Barbara Hartle, who was one of five defendants convicted under the Smith Act in Seattle in October, 1953:

> "Barbara Hartle, stoolpigeon, was suspended from the Communist Party in the early fall of 1952. In the face of intensified attacks from the enemy, she exhibited evidences of political corruption and personal irresponsibility



which were inconsistent with working class leadership, and consequently disciplinary steps were taken at that time.

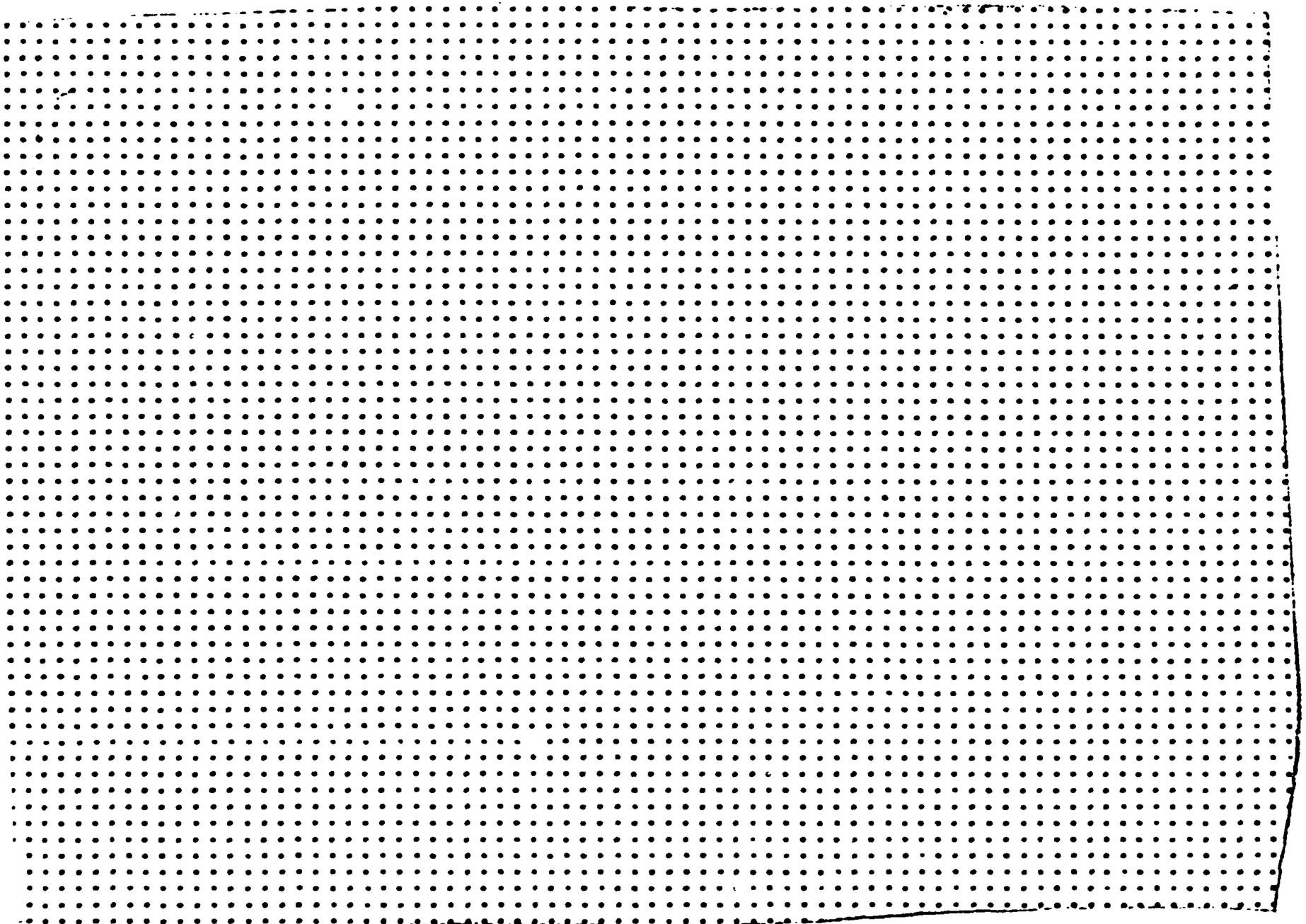
"Her present complete capitulation to the Gestapo agents of war and fascism is the inevitable end of the path which she first set foot on in rejecting her responsibility for struggle and devotion to the needs of the working class under all conditions; in rejecting her responsibility for working class discipline and unity; and finally, in her subjective rejection of the Marxist-Leninist criticism. Such is the path to betrayal.

"By this act of capitulation, Barbara Hartle has destroyed herself forever from life, from hope, from the strength and confidence in struggle and in the future, which is the invincible property of the working class. She has joined the ranks of the atom maniacs, the Hitlerites, the persecutors and inquisitors of every honest and democratic element in American life.

"The working class and its Communist vanguard, however, never capitulate, never surrender, never cease to struggle, to cast off cowards and betrayers in the process--and grow stronger, more disciplined, more united than ever...."[45]

(4) Exposure and Condemnation

[redacted]



Public announcements of expulsions adhere to a definite pattern and form. They are usually issued by the national, district or county committee. The events leading to and the reasons for the expulsion are presented in detail. The individual is appropriately branded with a standard set of epithets and abusive descriptions. The expelled member is invariably portrayed as having succumbed to or been victimized by the "corruption, degeneracy and opportunism" of the capitalist system

and Wall street. The statement contains a solemn warning, calling on all members to exert vigilance to avoid such recurrences in the future. As in all Communist pronouncements, the statement concludes with a solemn and stirring reminder of the invincible strength and implacable determination of the Communist Party to achieve its goal of socialism in the United States and throughout the whole world.

Samuel Sillen, writing in the Daily Worker the following week, stated in part:

> "We have seen a lot of belly-crawling in this time of the toad, but nothing has quite equalled last week's command-performance by Hollywood Director Elia Kazan.
>
> "Others have betrayed their country when the fascist whip cracked. It remained for Kazan to run a paid advertisement in the press announcing his loss of manhood. Not even in Hitler days did renegade intellectuals sink so low."
>
> . . . . . .
>
> "Kazan is not content with being a toad. He must also be a philosopher of toadyism." [46]

Bella V. Dodd in her autobiography tells of the reprisals taken against her and of her ostracism by the Party after her expulsion:

> "I braced myself for further attacks from the Party, and they came soon in terms of economic threats. Some of my law practice came from trade-union and Party members, and here action was swift. The union Communists told me there would be no more referrals to me. Party members who were my clients came to my office, some with their new lawyers, to withdraw their pending cases.
>
> "Reprisals came, too, in the form of telephone calls, letters, and telegrams of hate and vituperation, many of them from people I did not know. What made me feel desolate were the reprisals from those I had known best, those among the teachers whom I had considered friends. While I was busy with Party work I sometimes thought proudly of my hundreds of friends and how strong were the ties that bound us. Now those bonds were ropes of sand."

. . . . . .

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"Even personal friends, some of whom I myself had taken into the Party, were lost to me now, and among them were many of my former students and fellow teachers. If rejection by an individual can cause the emotional destruction which our psychiatrists indicate, it cannot, in some ways, compare with the devastation produced by a group rejection. This, I learned, is annihilating." 47

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